



## ROOMS WITH A VIEW

Use your surroundings as decor at these venues that show off city skylines and natural views.

Located in Pickering, Ontario, and nestled in Frenchman's Bay is **Port Restaurant**. The restaurant reopened in September with a fully redesigned interior after a fire closed the restaurant in 2018. The vast 5,500-square-foot space has a welcoming lounge area, with a 31-foot L-shaped bar that is accessible from inside the restaurant and from the picturesque patio. The dining area seats 200, while a newly added private dining room seats 18 and can be opened into a semiprivate space for cocktail-style events of as many as 40 guests. (1289 Wharf St., Pickering, Ontario, portrestaurant.ca)

**Bluffers Restaurant** had been a destination spot in the Scarborough Bluffs for close to 27 years. But after an ownership change, renovation, and menu revamp, the restaurant re-opened in March. With 6,000 square

feet of space, the venue offers two levels of seating that look out onto Lake Ontario. The restaurant has a capacity of 170 seated or 200 for receptions, with two distinct spaces for events. The large banquet hall seats 150 or holds 175 standing, while the upper banquet hall seats 80 or holds 100 standing. The restaurant specializes in seafood and locally sourced meat. (7 Brimley Road South, bluffersrestaurant.ca)

Well-known in Toronto for their brunch offerings, the **Good Fork** recently moved from Bloor West to the trendy Dundas West in July. Working with design studio Author, the 3,500-square-foot space merges contemporary design with old-world pottery and everyday materials of the traditional Anatolian cultures. Huge windows look out onto Dundas West,

which makes the restaurant ideal for people watching. The venue seats 80 guests, with a cocktail capacity of 150. (1552 Dundas St. West, goodfork.ca)

Following the success of its predecessor Gusto 101, **Gusto 501** was slated to open in late 2019 with five levels of fine dining. Architecture firm Partisans and design agency Wendy Haworth Design Studio worked on the space, which features an all-glass façade soaking the restaurant in sunlight. Each floor has a different experience, from the top-floor chef tasting kitchen aptly named 'Attico' with seating for 24; a semiprivate Amari Lounge with seating for 30; and an open-concept ground-level dining area with seating for 60. Each space is designed to be bought out individually or can be used together for a full buyout. (501 King St. East, gusto501.com)

## WHERE TEAMS CAN HAVE FRIENDLY COMPETITION

**Duke's Refresher & Bar** opened its second Toronto location in the St. Lawrence Market area in October. Measuring 6,000 square feet, the laid-back bar and casual dining restaurant has vintage furniture and a velvet painting gallery wall around the bar. Amusements include a mini basketball court with a full-size net, ping pong tables, shuffleboard, and a pool table. The restaurant is split into two distinct areas, the lower level dining area, which seats 300 people, and the upstairs mezzanine, which seats 150. For events, the venue offers the option of adding unlimited game play for guests. Full buyouts are available. (73 Front St. East, dukerefresher.ca/st-lawrence-market)



### ACTIVITIES

Since marijuana legalization took place in Canada nearly a year ago, cannabis has entered the mainstream, including the addition of cannabis bars at corporate and private events. **High Bar Hospitality & Event Group** (highbartoronto.com), which provides "budtending" services, will pre-roll your cannabis and bring it to an event. (The company requires that all cannabis be legally purchased before the event via the Ontario Cannabis Store, along with \$5 million in liability insurance.) Recently, budtenders set up at the Friendly Stranger's 25th anniversary party to educate new and experienced users on the products.