

1 websites, and online discussion boards weigh in on question, why is there no Michelin star
2 restaurants in Canada?

3 **Systemic Issues & Solutions**

4 The Villalobos (2018) and McNeilly (2017) articles document potential reasons and
5 solutions for the lack of Michelin star restaurants in Canada:

6 1) Michelin Guide Expansion Challenges – Currently, Michelin has the coveted restaurant
7 and hotel (and overall tourism) portfolio of 30 countries to maintain and update every year
8 (Villalobos, 2018, “What is the secret ingredient?”, para. 2). Therefore, adding a new city
9 or country to the list will not be an easy task. Although the for-profit business is interested
10 in adding other Asian cities to their list (e.g. Dubai and Shanghai), they might not have
11 enough interest in Canada.

12 Solution – To counter this potential reality, Villalobos (2018) suggests half jokingly but it
13 is nevertheless insightful, “perhaps Canada’s cultural, gastronomic and tourism leaders
14 should initiate a conversation with the team responsible for the famous red book created
15 by the second largest tire manufacturer in the world” (“What is the secret ingredient?”,
16 para. 2). If Canada would like Michelin star restaurants, contacting the Michelin and
17 negotiating funding for the one to three star rated inspections is a potential next step.

18 2) Innovative Cuisine Expectation – Michelin Guide’s inspectors are interested in the mastery
19 of the cuisine, allotting to an indispensable uniqueness in the making of the cuisine. This
20 means that each Canadian restaurant should develop their own distinct or hybrid style in
21 their menu, which is already a reality. However, many Canadian restaurants are not
22 consistent with their chosen niche (e.g. sushi, BBQ).

1 Solution – McNeilly (2018) rightfully suggests that Canadian chefs should aim to do one
2 thing and do it well. Of course, they can have crossovers (hybrid cuisine), but they should
3 “spend their lives perfecting it” (para. 6).

- 4 3) Global Influence Expectation - Canadian chefs do not distinctly influence global culinary
5 culture like Asian and European countries do. Apart from references to poutine and butter
6 tarts, Canadian fine dining is not yet identifiable (McNeilly, 2017, para. 9). Most fine
7 dining menus are still “shy and muted”, compared to other global delicacies, even though
8 we are one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world (para. 12).

9 Solution – Villalobos (2018) suggests that Canadian chefs should use their cultural
10 differences and upbringing to develop or merge their food niche. In addition, Maddeaux
11 (2016) states that “when our chefs leave for Europe or Asia to get culinary experience at
12 the world’s best restaurants, they bring back a diverse outlook and set of skills. A great
13 chef doesn’t spend their entire career in Canada” (para. 10). By travelling, Canadian chefs
14 can get inspiration elsewhere, inspiration from other cultures, which they can merge with
15 their own culture and cooking.

- 16 4) Bandwagon Trendy Customers – McNeilly (2017) states that fast food companies are
17 “capitalize on the need for over the top, viral foods and social media-friendly aesthetics to
18 successfully open restaurants”. Therefore, many Canadian chefs deal with customers
19 interested in trendy ‘Instagram-worthy’ food, food mostly developed in other countries and
20 cities, then becomes mainstream and finds its way into Canada (e.g. fast food items).
21 However, Canadian chefs with the unique, elegant, renowned, and innovative cuisine
22 struggle to get fellow Canadians to eat at their restaurants due to the increase in fast food,
23 food truck, and food delivery services.

1 Solution – Instead of following mainstream trends, Canadian chefs and their restaurants
2 should represent a dining scene that is consistent and unique to their niche, rather than
3 conforming to mainstream. For example, Villalobos (2018) describes the unique space of
4 the *El Celler de Can Roca* restaurant, when he visited Spain: “the space was the perfect
5 stage to display all of those flavours, to facilitate the enjoyment of the experience, to seal
6 the memory of that particular dinner as unique from lifetime of dinners” (“What is the
7 secret ingredient?”, para. 11).

- 8 5) Restaurant Etiquette Challenges - McNeilly (2017) mentions incidences of customers who
9 bring disruptive children to fine dining restaurant; she states that “ruining everyone else’s
10 dinner with the wails of a crying baby is not the accepted norm. Of course, we [Canadians]
11 would be outraged if the same rules were implemented here” (para. 24).

12 Solution – McNeilly (2017) suggests child-free policies in fine dining restaurants, or at
13 least strict age restricted policies, and other related and strict behavioural policies (even for
14 adults) that ensures all the restaurant’s customers are always enjoying their time there
15 (para. 24).

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