

[« Back](#) | [Print](#)

Memo From Toronto: What's Trending

By Donna Heiderstadt -- Interior Design, January 1, 2013



The second-floor Pantry Bar at the new Soho House Toronto was design by The Design Agency. Photo courtesy of Soho House.



Toronto's dining scene has been on fire over the past few years and the mix just got a whole lot hotter this past fall with the opening of **Cafe Boulud** and **dbar**, Chef Daniel Boulud's two eateries in the new **Four Seasons Hotel Toronto**, and Chef David Chang's **Momofuku Toronto** in the **Shangri-La Hotel Toronto**. Two of the three feature interiors by local designers: **The Design Agency** and **Yabu Pushelberg**. Another notable addition to the dining and entertainment scene in 2012 was the first **Soho House** in Canada, with interiors also by The Design Agency.

Momofuku, located in the Shangri-La Hotel Toronto, is unique in that it's comprised of four entirely different restaurants located on three floors and all designed by The Design Agency. Momofuku Noodle Bar, located on the ground floor and seating 70, is a representation of Chang's original in New York's East Village. It has an open kitchen, communal seating, and white-oak walls. **Nikai** is the beer, wine and sake bar and lounge located on the second floor, which seats 30 (plus 50 standing) and features locally sourced vintage furniture and Uminoff stools. **Daisho**, located on the third floor and offering 80 seats, is designed with white and black oak as well handcrafted **Maruni** "Hiroshima" chairs and "Excel" floor lamps and chandeliers from **Rich Brilliant Willing**. To the rear of Daisho is **Shoto**, a tasting-menu-only restaurant with an open kitchen and black granite bar seating 22 people.

Cafe Boulud, Chef Daniel Boulud's first restaurant in Toronto, is located on the mezzanine level of the Four Seasons and features a casual fine dining menu and a contemporary interior anchored by a stone floor quarried in Ontario along with

warm wood detailing. The space, designed by Rosalie Wise Sharp, wife of Four Seasons founder and chairman Isadore Sharp, also features a collection of vibrant pop-art paintings and art glass pieces by notable Canadian artists. It seats 150.

Also located in the Four Seasons is dbar, Boulud's lively street-level lounge serving cocktails and small plates ideal for sharing in a sleek modern space featuring 20-foot-tall floor-to-ceiling windows and interior design by Yabu Pushelberg.

While not open to the public, Soho House landed on Toronto's social scene recently when the London-based collection of private clubs with outposts in New York, West Hollywood, Miami and Berlin also opened here in 2012. Located in a three-story, 10,000-square-foot brick building on Bishops Block (adjacent to the new Shangri-La) and built in the 1840s, it was renovated brick-by-brick and features clubby retro interiors by The Design Agency with vintage furniture and an artwork collection that includes pieces by Jacob Kassay, **Douglas Coupland** and others. The Club restaurant, with its airy retro-chic Pantry Bar, is located on the second floor.

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[Memo From Toronto: People Are Talking About](#)

[Memo From Toronto: Insider's Take](#)

[« Back](#) | [Print](#)

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