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SPINNAKERS IMPRESSES WITH TASTY PAIRING

It's a sinfully decadent combination - beer and chocolate.

However, those wonderfully tempting treats have never been paired on a traditional menu. Until now.

The ultimate combination of appeal is now a further reason to visit one of the best pubs on the continent - Spinnakers in Victoria on Vancouver Island.

Of course it helps to have an on-site micro-brewery capable of the most tempting ales as well as a pastry chef with a nose for the exotic.

Paul Hadfield, the man behind Spinnakers' growth for more than 20 years, came up with the unusual, but tempting pairing.

"We noticed that customers, after they had had a few beers, would load up on chocolates on the way out. We thought perhaps we could combine the two," he said.

So Spinnakers produced a pairing of five beers and five chocolates for the menu.

Such innovation is a way of life at this Victoria landmark which led the way in bringing on-site brew pubs to Canada almost 23 years ago.

Not content with brewing beer on the premises, Spinnakers moved into a range of other self-contained activities to keep customers intrigued.

These include bed and breakfast accommodation in a wonderful cluster of nearby guesthouses, which make a short walk back from the pub at closing time a treat as opposed to a problem.

And when it comes to pub grub, this is simply five-star all the way with local produce and wines providing the basis of an exceptional menu which is at least on par with any restaurant in this vibrant city.