

★ **Cedar and Salt: Vancouver Island Recipes from Forest, Farm, Field, and Sea**

Emily Lycopulus

DL Acken

DL Acken, Photographer

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Emily Lycopulus and DL Acken's *Cedar and Salt* showcases Vancouver Island's impressive local food scene. The large island, located off the coast of British Columbia, has a mild climate that enables year-round foraging and farming, where even lavender, citrus, and olives can grow. An inviting tour of the island, the text describes the diverse harvest with ample color photos of farms, forests, fields, and coastal waters.

Farmers markets and small producers flourish on Vancouver Island, not only because of its gentle growing conditions, but because they can compete with the price of imported groceries from the mainland. The book features local farmers, brewers, and cheesemakers with beautiful photographs and prose. Distinctive island foods—including many oyster varieties and salal berries—are highlighted with sidebars and distinctive recipes. The nutty heirloom Red Fife, beloved by local bakers, stars in a recipe for scones, complete with a slathering of maple- and pink peppercorn-infused Strawberry Butter.

The cookbook focuses on fresh, seasonal ingredients. Its dishes are elegant yet homey, healthy yet colorful, and visually stunning. Vancouver Island's bountiful fruits, greens, pasture-raised meats, and seafood are often featured, but there are also recipes for indulgent cocktails and decadent brunch items, including Coffee-Glazed Apple Bacon Fritters. Lycopulus and Acken experiment with unusual flavors and local ingredients and explain how to make a simple syrup from edible lilacs and how to dry sea salt. Notable among the entries is a potential centerpiece for a dinner party or special celebration, Spruce-Rubbed Bison Carpaccio with Wild Plum Reduction.

Acken and Lycopulus are persuasive ambassadors for their beloved island. *Cedar and Salt's* visual food tour, complete with lists of local farmers markets and farm-to-table restaurants, makes it hard to resist a trip to Vancouver Island for a real-life food tour.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (November / December 2019)

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