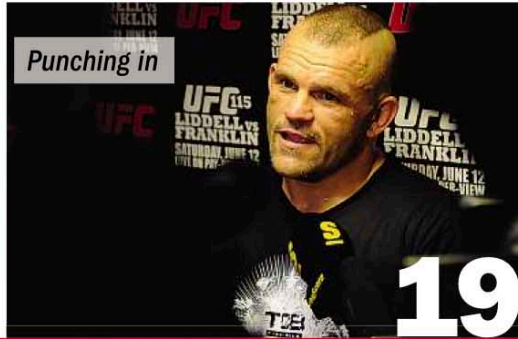




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Carnivorous Lee



Punching in

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Oh Holly night

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# courier

photo Jason Lang



## Politically correct?

The comptroller general's scathing report on the Vancouver School Board criticizes trustees for wasting time on advocacy at the expense of financial management. Trustees like board chair Patti Bacchus say both responsibilities carry equal weight. —story by Naoibh O'Connor

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Where many sports bars fall short, stylishly designed Red Card, attached to the Moda Hotel at 900 Seymour, scores well in the beer, wine, cocktails and food department. *photos Dan Toulgoet*

## World Cup fever alive and kicking at Red Card



**The  
Hired Belly**  
with  
Tim Pawsey

As the World Cup kicks off today, chances are you're planning where to catch some of the action. Thanks in no small part to success of the Winter Olympics, Vancouver's bar culture has exploded. And when you consider that only a short while back the heavy hand of the Liquor Licensing Branch was dictating not only how many TV screens were allowed but how big they could be, well, thankfully we've come a long way.

There's no shortage of TVs (18 and counting, with two more big screens

to come) at the Red Card Sports Bar, the cleverly named, recent addition to the Moda Hotel (900 Seymour St., ph. 604-689-4460).

(For those lacking soccer knowledge, when the ref shows the yellow card it's a warning. The red card is waved next, or for more serious infractions, and you're out of the game—if not several—and your team plays short handed.)

This red-brick and wood-trimmed sports-mad emporium offers the perfect brassy contrast to siblings Uva Wine Bar and Cibo (named by *En Route* magazine as Canada's best new restaurant in 2009).

Where so many rooms fall short, Red Card scores well in the beer, wine and drinks department—thanks in no small part to the input of Moda sommelier and general manager Se-

bastien Le Goff, before he left town to open Daniel Boulud's DB Bistro in Singapore.

The draught line up (close to 20 on tap) balances the obvious (Molson Canadian) with smaller, more taste-driven pints such as R&B Raven Cream and internationals like Murphy's, Pike Place and Caffreys. You can take your pick of serious taps, or wander over to a cocktail list of specially themed World Cup concoctions, including the Forza Italia (Go Italy) made with grappa, Campari and Galliano and shaken with cranberry juice, spiced sugar and orange bitters.

Behind the scenes, the star of Red Card's kitchen is a specially imported Marana Forni state of the art, part gas/part wood-fired oven that turns out decent thin crust pizza and calzone.

**Continued next page**

# Stylish sports bar not afraid to get its footie wet

Continued from page 36

Top tastes from our visit were the West Coast, which sports a tasty combo of smoked salmon with mascarpone cream, lots of capers and fresh arugula, and the Diavola, with Bresaola beef, spicy capicollo, chilies and mozzarella.

We also like the fact that the kitchen, which turns out a wide range of Italian fare, isn't hidden away but fully visible on a level behind the long bar, overlooking the room—like a boxing ring.

Red Card takes its World Cup obligations seriously. Even though the time difference between Vancouver and South Africa presents some challenges—never mind. On game days, the room will open at 7 a.m. for breakfast and be licensed from 9 a.m., which seems remarkably civilized for Vancouver. On non-game days, regular licensed hours start at 11 a.m.

There's no shortage of sports bars with attendant TVs in this town, some better than others. But Red Card's kitchen, smart surroundings and polished service puts it well beyond pub fare.

We'll be back—no matter who's playing.

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**Red Card's cocktail list includes an assortment of specially themed World Cup concoctions.**

*photo Dan Toulgoet*

## **Belly's Budget Best**

### • **Porcupine Ridge Syrah 2008**

Arguably one of the best Syrah deals going. Vibrant red fruit in a mouth watering, juicy but structured palate with easy tannins and black pepper spice through the end. Think grilled anything. Made by Boekenhoutskloof but remember the Porcupine. BCLS \$ 17.99.

