

A NEW DANCE

Making art out of difference
in Montreal PAGE 2

STORM WATCH

A sandbar butting up against the restless Atlantic
is no place to be in a hurricane PAGE 4

Globe Life & Arts

TRAVEL



Hot, sizzling, freshly made meals are so tasty, visitors quickly understand the meaning of 'kuidaore,' a local term that roughly translates to 'eat until you drop.' STEVE DOLINSKY

EATING MY WAY AROUND OSAKA

In a city obsessed with food, it's tempting to try a little of everything, from doughy balls filled with chewy octopus to Frisbee-sized pancakes stuffed with wagyu beef. Nearly drunk on umami, **Steve Dolinsky** finds it's also all surprisingly affordable

OSAKA, JAPAN

I came for the famous octopus balls and cabbage pancakes, but wound up enamoured with a food hall in the basement of a department store and a series of juicy, crunchy bar snacks in a series of standing room-only restaurants in a narrow back alley. Osaka will do that to you. You come for the iconic dishes, then get swept up in another direction, which is why it's important to arrive in Japan's second-largest city with an open mind, a flexible schedule and a big appetite.

Most tourists never set foot here, because first-timers blow their entire vacation on Tokyo, with its hushed cocktail lounges and boisterous *izakayas* (neighborhood pubs) before heading to Kyoto, a two-hour bullet-train ride south, where they stroll among the splendour of ancient temples. But Osaka is only a 15-minute train ride past Kyoto. Since I've been to Japan before – thus checking both Tokyo and Kyoto off of my list – I made a point to spend three days in Osaka this winter. I quickly learned to appreciate the local term *kuidaore*: eat until you drop.

Osaka may have been bombed heavily by the United States during the Second World War, but its rebuilt mix of urban and industrial neighbourhoods includes a range of eating options in a city obsessed with food. Not only is this a metropolis that values its street snacks, it also reveres its Michelin-starred restaurants (89 of them).

Osaka, Page 3

