

## SV VISIONARY

### Fishing in Troubled Waters

**Frank Pabst**

[bluewatercafe.net](http://bluewatercafe.net)

**Executive Chef, Blue Water Cafe**

“Jellyfish!” exclaims Frank Pabst, one of Vancouver’s most creative chefs. “It’s all about texture, and what you marinate it in.”

Pabst’s penchant for unusual seafood doesn’t end there. Seated in the brick-and-tile elegance of Yaletown’s Blue Water Cafe, he proceeds to extol the virtues of sardines, octopus, and more.

His culinary career began in Europe, where he learned to respect food, both in terms of its origins and how it is consumed.



*Photo by [Jaime Kowal](#)*

He later arrived in Vancouver, making his mark on places like Lumière and Bistro Pastis before coming on as executive chef at Blue Water. Pabst’s European background, however, continues to influence his ways in the kitchen. “Respect for food, it can be everything,” he says.

This respect underlies Pabst’s commitment to sustainability. A founding member of the Vancouver Aquarium’s Ocean Wise program, Blue Water’s seafood is sustainably harvested, and, whenever possible, wild—which

requires some research. "Whenever a new product becomes available, we check with the Aquarium to see what they think of it."

Sablefish and lobster are on the menu, but reliable standbys like halibut and salmon aren't readily available during the winter months. This led Pabst to launch his "Unsung Heroes" menu, which just wrapped up its yearly, month-long run. It's a showcase of what our wintry West Coast waters have to offer, including odd but tasty items like sea urchins and mackerel.

The menu has grown in popularity, meaning that sustainable delicacies might just be catching on. Which is great, because there's more than enough of them for us to all have a taste. "We should eat things that aren't going to be used up," Pabst asserts.

"We should eat things that are abundant in the ocean."

—JC