



## Six Minutes with a Chef: Bradley Dickinson

By Christina Dudley

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This Week's Featured Chef at the Bellevue Farmers Market

Bradley Dickinson

Some of you happy hour hounds already know this, but happy hour locations in Bellevue have become as common as vampires in teen books. And like vampires in teen books, Bellevue happy hours tend to be stylish, tasty crowd-pleasers.

Take [Pearl Bar & Dining](#), for instance, winner of *425 Magazine's* Best Happy Hour and Best Lunch in 2010. Recently some friends and I happened to drop in for the later (post 9pm) happy hour, only to discover it was premier night for *Sex and the City II*, and swarms of singles packed the restaurant, dressed within an inch of their lives. Yikes! Despite our jeans and we-just-want-to-have-a-night-off-from-the-kids air, the server was gracious and chatty, and the people-watching just enhanced our enjoyment of tempura, calamari and cocktails.

Not only does Pearl's food and ambiance garner raves, but proprietors Bradley Dickinson and Mikel Rogers believe in "freshly prepared, seasonally inspired fare," much of it gathered locally. To reflect this commitment, Bradley Dickinson will be the latest chef demo at the Bellevue Farmers Market on Thursday, August 19, at 4pm. As with our other chefs, I hit him up with our list of questions:

### **Any idea what you will be demo-ing at the Bellevue Farmers Market?**

I'm looking forward to a little trip to the market, I'll be bringing my Sous Chef JJ along as well. He's really my right hand in the kitchen, we work ideas back and forth all the time.

We haven't decided what to cook [yet] – but I have a feeling it will include peaches and tomatoes. (Which are both looking really nice right now!)

### **How flexible is the Pearl menu? What use do you make of seasonal or local ingredients?**

The menu at Pearl changes all the time. We like to say that it's seasonal, but it might change even more often than that--about every couple of weeks. We like to keep mixing things up and since we are a single operation--we can adjust things on the fly! We prefer

to use local for many different reasons, but this time of year the local products just taste better! We know that they are fresher. For example, we get our berries from Sakuma Farms in Mount Vernon. Sometimes the product is picked in the morning and being served at Pearl later that day. Now that's fresh.

**Which dishes are most popular in the restaurant?**

The menu does change all the time, but there are couple of items that have become "signature" dishes, and if we took them off the menu some of our guests would howl. The Sablefish with Namya broth and Dungeness crab dumplings is one of those. We marinate it overnight in a little miso and honey. The Namya is a little spicy with a touch of curry. One other item that is really popular is the Wagyu Sirloin. This comes from Snake River farms in Idaho. We grill it and serve it with oven-roasted Yukon gold potatoes, bleu cheese fritters and a little herb demi. Yum! It is superbly marbled and really tasty!

**Does Pearl purchase any ingredients from Bellevue Farmers Market or other Markets? If yes, what, and from which farmers/vendors?**

I started going to the market a couple of years ago before we opened Pearl. I was looking to meet some of the local farmers and other vendors, and now some of their products are used every day at Pearl. There are several farms that we use through our produce vendor that are here at the market, including **Willie Greens, Hedlin Farms, Mt. Townsend Creamery, and Taylor Shellfish**. I like coming to the market to meet interesting people and to try their products. Last year we got some wonderful vinegar and used it in our duck recipe all winter long.

**Anything you would particularly like us to highlight in Bellevue.com or UrbanFarmJunkie?**

We like to think that we're a bit of a hidden gem, a local operator amongst a sea of chains. We are happy to be in downtown Bellevue and proud to be associated with the Bellevue Farmers Market.

Thanks for your time, Bradley.

<http://www.bellevue.com/article.php?id=139>