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THIS STOP

DUNDAS WEST

Across Canada, manufacturing hubs are being transformed into trendy destinations, where cool architecture and atmosphere meet the unique experiences of indie retail.

BY ANNA CIPOLLONE

Take a quick walk north on Dundas from Bloor and you'll soon reach one of Toronto's oldest West-end neighbourhoods. Dubbed **the Junction**, it's a destination known for its antique dealers and history of prohibition.

With a name born from its proximity to the intersection of four railway lines built in the late 19th century, known as the West Toronto Diamond, this heritage community was once a hub for factory workers. With plenty of rowdy taverns catering to the after-work crowd, a 94-year ban on alcohol sales in the area was only recently lifted in the 2000s. Nowadays, a renaissance has hit this quaint yet trendy strip, with a new crop of restaurants, shops and galleries sprouting up everywhere.

Grab a fresh fruit smoothie at **The Beet Organic Café** for a pop of protein before finding your flow in a soothing vinyasa class at **Breathe Yoga**. With a revitalized spirit, tackle your weekly grocery list at **The Sweet Potato**, a charming little organic market with all the natural health necessities.

Set your sights on local art stars at **Narwhal Contemporary Art Gallery** and discover emerging Canadian talent. Wander from old shops to new; for reclaimed fixtures and rare antique gems, peruse **Post + Beam Architectural Reclamation**, or discover art and design at **Mjölk,** a boutique design shop featuring innovative work from Scandinavian and Japanese artisans.

Power up at midday with homemade vegan delights at **Cool Hand of a Girl**. Get a caffeine boost at **Locomotive**, featuring locally roasted espresso beans, or set up on **Full Stop**'s spacious patio if you travel in a pack. Dinner at the bustling **Playa Cabana Cantina** for high-energy mojitos and re-inspired Mexican fare is sure to hit the spot. If you're looking for a more intimate vibe, **Bricco Kitchen and Wine Bar** is a new homestyle Italian enoteca. Meet friends for house-made microbrews at the **Indie Ale House** or play vintage board games and listen to live music at **3030**.

WHEN IN...

Vancouver

Stop in at **Gene Café**, a flatiron building on Commercial Drive. With ample sun soaking in from big bright windows, industrial concrete and soft cedar benches for people watching, it's the perfect place to sip your morning brew.

Calgary

Try **Café Vendome**, where brunch is offered alongside fresh roasts in a charming brownstone building, with live music on Thursday nights.

Ottawa

At **The Ministry of Coffee**, with its beautiful exposed brick wall and wooden countertop, you can try a twist in your morning cup, like the Nutella latte, or nosh on confections baked in-house.