

edible

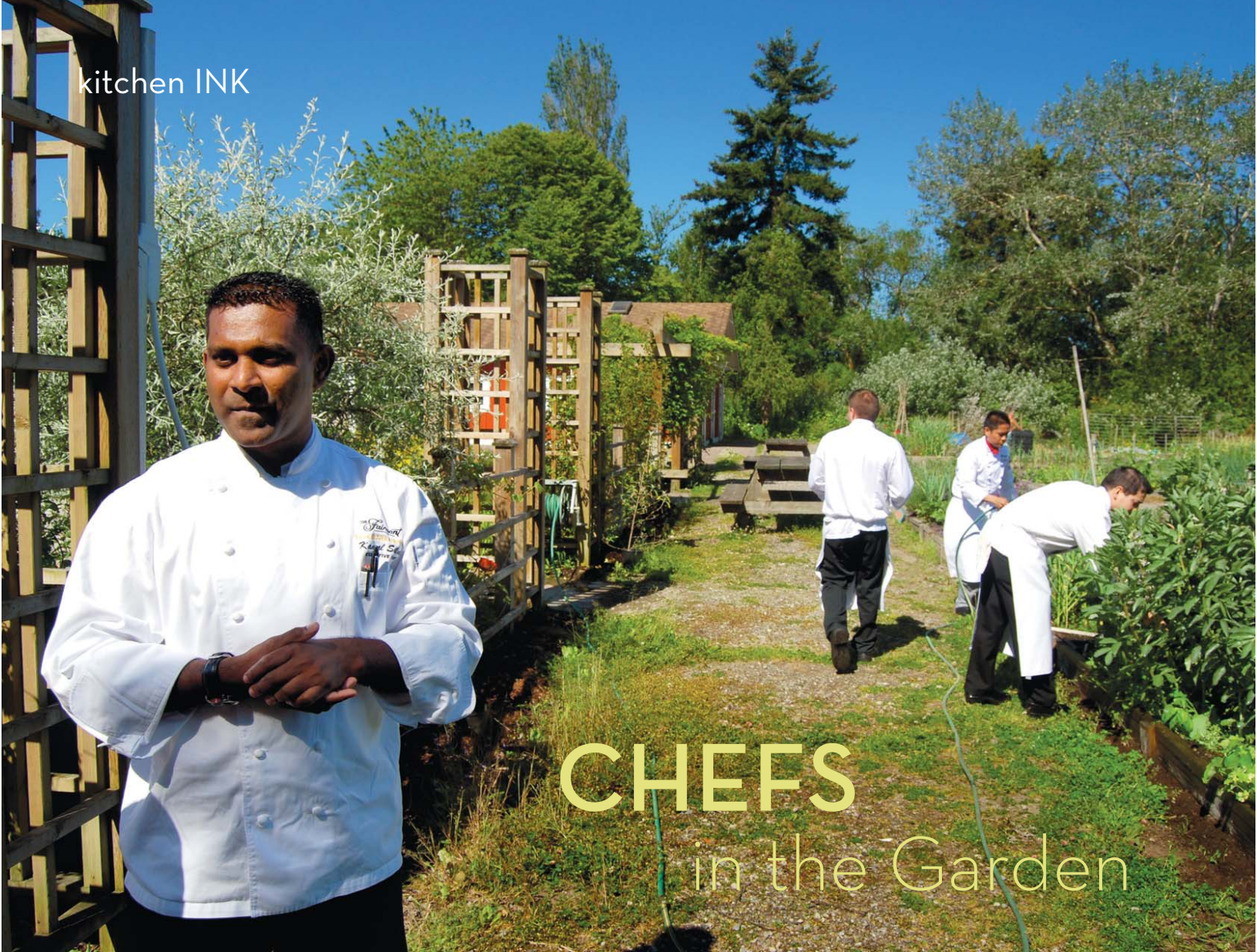
VANCOUVER[®]

THE STORY ON LOCAL FOOD

ISSUE LUCKY THIRTEEN • HIGH SUMMER 2010

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CHEFS in the Garden

It's unusual for the culinary team of an airport hotel to pick gooseberries, garlic, onions, Thumbelina carrots, and lemon balm from their own garden, and Kamal Silva is one Executive Chef who appreciates the opportunity to grow the items that add local flavour to his menus. He stands on the fringes of Richmond's **Terra Nova Rural Park** and points with pride to the just-visible **Fairmont YVR**.

Kamal has been with the Fairmont group for over 10 years and has worked in locations like Dubai, Banff, and Whistler, but this relationship with soil is unique to his experience. He's proud that their restaurant is the only one to grow food at Terra Nova, whose mission is to connect school children with the earth and their community, and to give them the experience of growing food. The Fairmont YVR staff earns the patch of land with sweat equity, helping Terra Nova Schoolyard Society's founder, Ian Lai, with the physical labour of tending the 5,000-square-foot garden while the school children are on their summer break.

Kamal smiles as he watches Sous Chef Marcus Routbard and Senior Chef de Partie Brent Stevenson (also this year's official Gardener-

in-Residence) inspect their ripening strawberries and big, beautiful fava beans. He's observed the way their attitude to food has changed as a result of this garden. Most chefs purchase their produce from suppliers; these chefs are their own suppliers. "This is a different experience for them," Kamal says. "They're growing the food themselves, pulling it out of the soil. They understand what's involved." This is their own produce; they know exactly how fresh it is, and just how good it is. They also understand that if the sun is slow to appear, the berries will be late to ripen.

The garden gives out-of-town guests an authentic taste of BC, but Kamal says that BC residents appreciate it, too. Many travellers stay overnight at the hotel before an early morning flight, and they've come to enjoy the quality, diversity, and creativity of the Garden to Globe menu.

Globe @ YVR, Fairmont Vancouver Airport, 3111 Grant McConachie Way, 604-207-5200. www.fairmont.com/vancouverairport
Terra Nova Schoolyard Society. www.kidsinthegarden.org