

# HOLT RENFREW

## Holt Renfrew Announces the Final Touches and Menu of the Highly Anticipated Holts Café

*The iconic restaurant unveils a new dramatic design and full menu just in time to celebrate a new decade*

**TORONTO - January 23, 2020** - [Holt Renfrew](#) announced today that its flagship restaurant, [Holts Café](#), Toronto's hottest dining destination for fashion and food connoisseurs is now open with a complete new look and menu. The modern, sophisticated, and warm space was designed by internationally-acclaimed [Alex Cochrane Architects](#) and provides a contemporary Canadian menu by Executive Chef Benjamin Lillico for a fashion-forward and lively atmosphere that is synonymous with Holt Renfrew.

Tasked with envisioning the next iteration of the much-celebrated Holts Café, Cochrane looked towards international restaurant destinations and created a signature space that is both modern and welcoming. The restaurant was designed to offer a variety of spaces to meet various needs of Holt Renfrew's guests including a large dining room and bar for guests to see-and-be-seen, a relaxing lounge, and a private dining suite for events and celebrations.

New 20-foot-high floor-to-ceiling windows designed by Toronto's Gensler bring an abundance of natural light into the space, giving guests unprecedented views onto Toronto's Bloor Street. These windows, coupled with Cochrane's concept for an open café design, also allow natural light into the recently renovated women's footwear department beyond. A palette of white oak, rosewood, off-white terrazzo, and rich brass provides a timeless framework to the striking vibrant blue, red, yellow, and green jewel-toned accents in the furniture and design features.

"Our brief was to take this iconic location and transform it into a social space that evolves from day into the evening," says Alex Cochrane, Architect of Holts Café Bloor Street. "We leveraged the natural light and introduced design elements of saturated colour to add a playful dynamic against the warmer tones of wood and leather. We felt it was important to divide the space into four rooms creating intimate dining spaces, each with its own atmosphere".

The new menu, created by Executive Chef Benjamin Lillico, pays homage to Holts Café classics like the BLT Salad and the Holts Steak Frites with a fresh and simplistic approach. Both returning and new Holts guests will also discover Chef Lillico's new seasonal favourites, including a plant-based Organic Carrot Tart and Seafood Tagliatelle.

"I'm thrilled to be launching the Holts Café flagship alongside an incredible team at Holt Renfrew and I cannot wait for everyone to try this new menu," says Chef Benjamin. "My vision is to create contemporary Canadian dishes while remaining focused on sustainability, quality ingredients, locality, and seasonality."

Beyond its lauded lunch menu, the new café will offer an expanded weekend brunch, afternoon tea from Monday to Friday, and daily evening dinner service. Guests can also look forward to a year-round calendar of exciting special events and programs beginning with a Holts Café Lunar New Year menu on January 25 and 26.

Service times are from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday to Wednesday and from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Thursday to Saturdays. Catering is also offered daily. For more information please contact 416-355-2832 or [holtscafe.bloor@holtrenfrew.com](mailto:holtscafe.bloor@holtrenfrew.com).

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**About Holt Renfrew:**

Celebrating an over 180-year heritage, Holt Renfrew is recognized worldwide for an inspired shopping experience. Founded in 1837 as a modest hat shop, Holt Renfrew would soon become a purveyor of fashion to Her Majesty Queen Victoria. In the 1930s, Holt Renfrew began to establish exclusive accounts with leading European designers, hosting Monsieur Christian Dior himself in 1947 as he launched his "New Look". After many years of foreign ownership Holt Renfrew was acquired in 1986 by W. Galen and the Hon. Hilary M. Weston. Under Weston ownership Holt Renfrew has become Canada's destination for luxury retail.

**About Alex Cochrane Architect:**

London based architectural practice started in 2009 by Alex Cochrane architect. The practice has enjoyed acclaim for a series of projects including The Boathouse in Berkshire, Selfridges Men's Designer Floors and Personal Shopping, The Silence Room, a 5-storey house and studio in Kensington, and more recently the world's largest eyewear department in Selfridges new Accessories Hall. Alex's current projects include the substantial refurbishments of Selfridges' Executive and Buyers and Merchandise Offices on Oxford Street, the sensitive refurbishment of Marcel Breuer's de Bijenkorf building in Rotterdam, and a large restaurant in Holt Renfrew's flagship store in Toronto. Alex is supported by a fantastic team of full-time staff including architects, interior and product designers with a deep knowledge of cultures both past and present and a longing to discover new possibilities for the built environment.

**About Benjamin Lillico, Executive Chef at Holts Café, Bloor Street:**

A fast-rising star in the culinary industry, Ontario native Benjamin Lillico is the newly appointed Executive Chef of Holts Café's new flagship location at the Holt Renfrew Bloor Street store. Benjamin was most recently the Executive Chef of the Ignite Restaurant Group's The Rich Uncle Tavern. Prior to that role, he was leading kitchens within The Charcoal Group restaurants. Chef Benjamin also teaches part time at Conestoga College in the culinary department and has worked at Ontario's only CAA five diamond awarded restaurant, the renowned Langdon Hall. Benjamin has spearheaded mentorship roles with Ontario Colleges including Conestoga and Niagara. In 2014, he was a member of the Canadian team for the World Culinary Olympics in Luxemburg, finishing in the top 5. He went on to become team captain of the Junior Culinary Team Canada for the 2016 Culinary Olympics in Germany, winning multiple gold and silver medals on the international stage. Benjamin has also won culinary competitions held by the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, Skills Ontario, and received the "Top 30 Under 30" award with the Ontario Hospitality Institute.

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