

ESSENTIALS

ONLY IN SEATTLE



PUT A LID ON IT

A SEATTLE-BORN COFFEE TOPPER MAKES TO-GO CUPPAS TASTE BETTER

Who better than a Seattleite to come up with a high-tech coffee lid? Doug Fleming, a native son and avid follower of “third wave” coffee trends, thought it was a shame to ruin high-quality coffee by sipping it through a poorly designed lid. He founded a company called Vaporpath in 2007 and devoted years to developing a better sipping experience. At long last, the **Viora Lid** (vioralid.com) was born—and launched to acclaim in April at the Specialty Coffee Association of America conference. Manufactured in the U.S. and made of recyclable, odorless polystyrene, the Viora Lid does at least three things better than the traditional to-go-cup topper: It drinks like a ceramic mug (thanks to the deep lip and a “drink well” built into the lid); it heightens the flavor experience (in part by positioning a lid opening just below your nose); and it reduces messy splashes (via the drink well, which allows excess liquid to drain back into the cup), therefore lowering your dry cleaning bill. At press time, Viora Lids were just starting to land in independent coffee shops, ironically, none of which are in Seattle—yet. Keep an eye on the website for added locations, or take a road trip to Vancouver, B.C., and test drive Viora at Great Dane Coffee. **MANDOLIN BRASSAW**



Rooms take cues from nature at the Skwachays Lodge in Vancouver, B.C. Inset: The lodge's urban setting in Chinatown



ROAD TRIP!

WHERE: SKWACHAYS LODGE in Vancouver, B.C. **WHY:** This new

boutique hotel (rooms start at \$225, 31 W Pender St.; 604.687.3589; skwachays.com) near the historic Chinatown neighborhood is awash in art and culture from the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Each floor is assigned an animal spirit, and each of the 18 rooms features a different design—reflected in paintings, carvings and blankets—created by an aboriginal artist in collaboration with a local interior design firm. Browse the Urban Aboriginal Fair Trade Gallery in the lobby, or experience ceremonial cleansing processes in the Smudge Room (which uses smoke from burning herbs) and the self-explanatory Sweat Lodge. The lodge's lower floors contain residential units and a workshop where artists featured in the gallery live and work, providing guests a chance to meet them. **SHARE THE WEALTH:** Proceeds from the hotel and gallery support the Vancouver Native Housing Society's mission to provide safe, secure and affordable housing for the urban aboriginal community. **WHILE YOU'RE THERE:** Soak up some of Vancouver's oldest and quirkiest architecture, such as the 6-foot-wide Sam Kee Building (8 W Pender St.); the Wing Sang Building (51 E Pender St.), built in 1889 and currently home to Canadian real estate maven Bob Rennie's private contemporary art collection (schedule a free tour at renniecollection.org); or the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, the first of its kind built outside of China (vancouverchinesegarden.com). **LAUREN MANG**

APPLAUSE-O-METER

