

# Food / Beverage Servers & Bartenders

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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## Food & Beverage Servers [NOC 2021: 65200 / NOC 2016: 6513] / Bartenders [NOC 2021: 64301 / NOC 2016: 6512]

***Food & Beverage Servers may also be called:***

- *Banquet server*
- *Waiter / waitress*
- *Cocktail waiter / waitress*
- *Wine steward*

***Bartenders may also be called:***

- *Barkeeper*
- *Bar attendant*

### 1. What Would I Do?

***Food and beverage servers*** take food and beverage orders and serve orders to customers.

As a ***food and beverage server***, your duties can include:

- greeting patrons, giving menus to customers, making food and beverage recommendations and answering questions
- taking food and beverage orders and giving them to kitchen and bar staff
- recommending wines that match with customers' meals
- serving food and beverages
- collecting and processing credit card, debit or cash payments for bills

**Bartenders** mix and serve alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

As a bartender, your duties can include:

- taking beverage orders from serving staff or directly from patrons
- mixing liquor, soft drinks, water and other ingredients to prepare cocktails and other drinks
- preparing mixed drinks, wine, draft or bottled beer and non-alcoholic beverages for food and beverage servers or serve directly to patrons
- collecting payment for beverages and record sales
- maintaining inventory and control of bar stock and order supplies
- cleaning bar area and washing glassware
- making sure provincial liquor legislation and regulations are followed

More information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Food & Beverage Servers**  
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>
- **WorkBC Career Profile for Bartenders**  
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>
- **Career Cruising database** (Profiles for 'Waiters' and 'Bartenders') Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page  
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

## 2. Am I Suited For This Job?

***Food & Beverage Servers and Bartenders should have:***

- *strong people skills and outgoing personality*
- *excellent communication skills*
- *basic math ability*
- *a good memory*
- *organized and able to multitask*
- *good physical stamina as they work on their feet most of the time*

**Food & beverage servers** may work either indoors or outdoors, depending on the setting and the season. Shift work and split shifts around regular meal times are common. You may also be required to work evenings, weekends and holidays, when people are more likely to dine out. During busy times, you may be pressured to work faster than usual. You may also have to deal with difficult customers or situations.

**Bartenders** usually work indoors. You often work evenings and weekends. Many work part-time.

Sources: Work BC & Career Cruising Database

### 3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

#### **Food & Beverage Servers**

In British Columbia, the median annual salary for *food & beverage servers* is \$31,284.

In BC's regions, you can expect to make:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
<a href="#">British Columbia</a>	15.20	15.20	22.00
<a href="#">Cariboo Region</a>	15.20	15.20	20.00
<a href="#">Kootenay Region</a>	15.20	15.20	24.04
<a href="#">Lower Mainland–Southwest Region</a>	15.20	15.20	22.00
<a href="#">Nechako Region</a>	15.20	15.20	24.00
<a href="#">North Coast Region</a>	15.20	15.20	24.00
<a href="#">Northeast Region</a>	15.20	15.20	20.00
<a href="#">Thompson–Okanagan Region</a>	15.20	15.20	20.00
<a href="#">Vancouver Island and Coast Region</a>	15.20	16.00	24.04

Table from Job Bank Wage Report <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis>

Your earnings vary depending on skills, experience, employer, location, and the number of shifts worked. Some work full-time, but a large number work part-time.

Although server's wages are typically low, you usually receive tips from customers for good service, averaging between 10% and 20% of customer's bill.

In some large restaurants and hotels, you belong to unions and their wage rates are negotiated by union representatives.

### **Bartenders**

In British Columbia, the median annual salary for *bartenders* is \$33,370.

In BC's regions, you can expect to make:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
<a href="#">British Columbia</a>	15.20	16.00	22.00
<a href="#">Lower Mainland–Southwest Region</a>	15.20	16.00	22.00
<a href="#">Thompson–Okanagan Region</a>	15.20	16.00	22.00

Table from Job Bank Wage Report <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis>

Earnings for bartenders depend on factors such as the number of hours worked, experience, and the size and location of the establishment. You are typically paid an hourly wage—usually ranging from minimum wage to a high of about \$22.00. However, a large portion of your earnings comes in the form of tips. As a result, how much you earn annually depends on your customer service skills.

Sources: WorkBC and Career Cruising

## **4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?**

### **Food & beverage servers:**

The availability of part-time and entry-level work makes this occupation attractive

to students who are either paying for their education or trying to earn extra money. Competition for jobs will be highest in fine dining establishments, where more money can be made. Those with excellent customer service skills will be in high demand.

**Food and Beverage Servers – Job Opening Outlook**

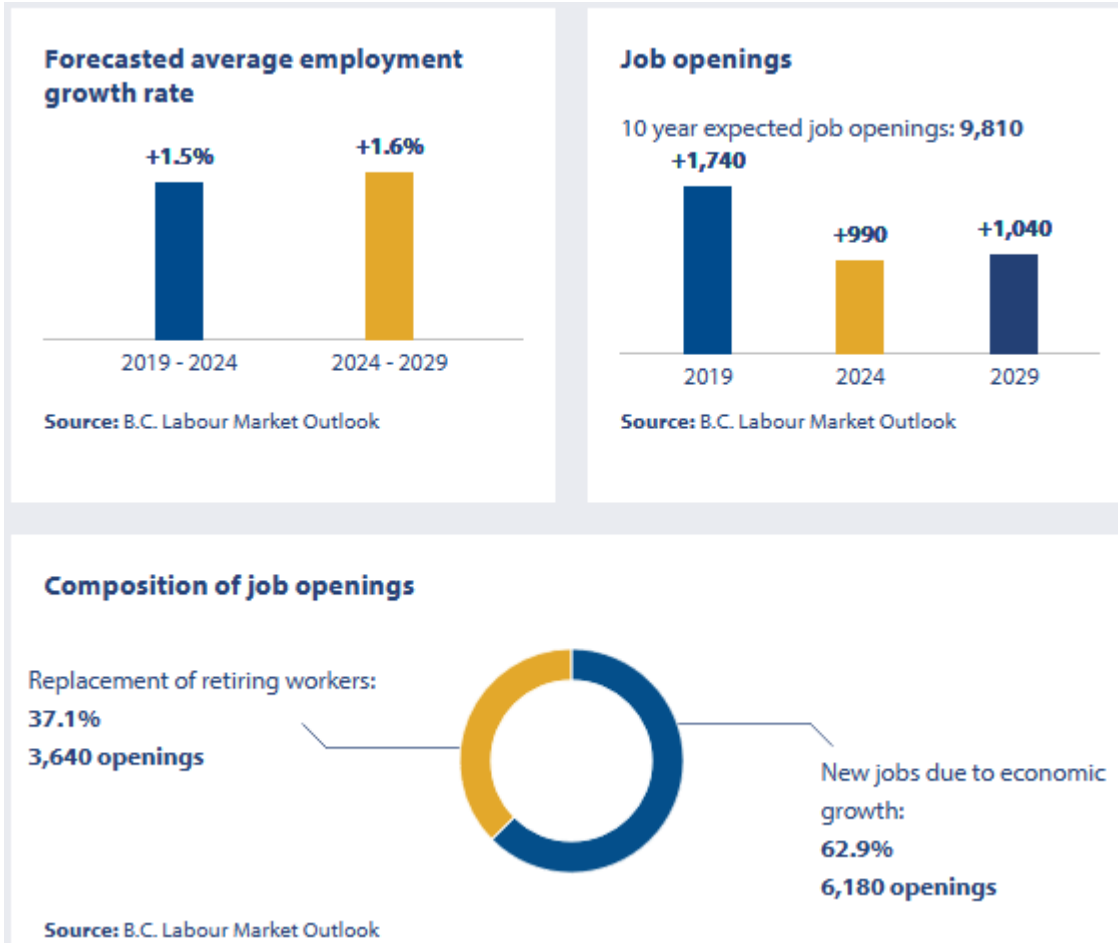


Chart from WorkBC

**Bartenders:**

This occupation should experience average employment growth. 1,440 job openings are expected between 2019-2029.

## Bartenders

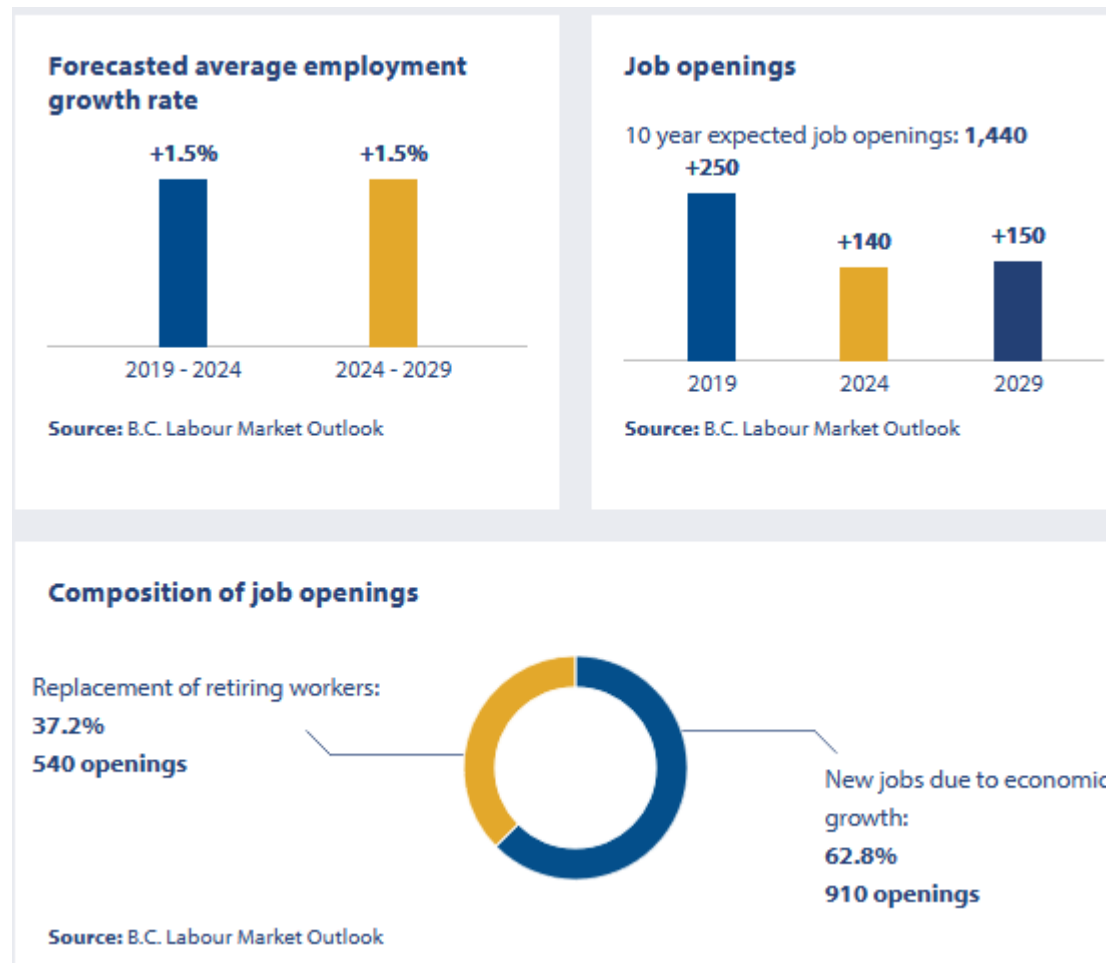


Chart from WorkBC

## 5. How do I become a Food & Beverage Server or a Bartender?

### ***Food & Beverage Servers:***

In B.C., no standard training or education is required for food & beverage servers. However, secondary school graduation is preferred.

Other training or requirements may include:

- food safety training and customer service experience

- on-the-job training under the supervision of other experienced workers
- **FOODSAFE Certificate Level 1** for front line food service workers (cooks, servers, bussers, dishwashers, and deli workers). FOODSAFE covers food safety information, foodborne illness, receiving and storing food, preparing food, serving food, cleaning and sanitizing
- **FOODSAFE Certificate Level 2:** for kitchen managers, owners and others responsible for managing food safety in foodservice establishments
- **Serving It Right Certificate:** required for servers who are at least 19 years of age and serve alcohol
- **BSAFE:** online health and safety training program designed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

***Bartenders:***

In B.C., ***bartenders are required to complete the Serving It Right Certificate in order to serve alcohol.*** *Serving It Right* teaches the legal responsibilities when serving alcohol, and provides effective techniques to prevent problems related to over-service.

Other requirements may include:

- secondary school graduation is recommended for bartenders
- bartending courses are an advantage when seeking employment
- you may also receive on the job training
- **BSAFE:** online health and safety training program designed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

For more information see:

- FOODSAFE Program: <http://www.foodsafe.ca/>
- Serving It Right: <https://www.responsible-servicebc.gov.bc.ca/serving-it-right-course>
- BSAFE: <https://www.go2hr.ca/training-education/bsafe>
- Go2HR <https://www.go2hr.ca/training-education/foodsafe-by-distance-education>  
(FOODSAFE courses by correspondence)



## 6. How Do I Find A Job?

### ***Where would I work?***

#### ***Food & beverage servers may work in:***

- *restaurants, hotels, casinos, clubs, banquet halls, and other places where food and drinks are served*

#### ***Bartenders may work in:***

- *bars, restaurants, clubs, hotels, airports, concert halls and other licensed establishments*

### ***Finding Advertised Jobs***

Jobs are advertised in a variety of sources including newspapers, magazines and online job sites.

#### ***Local Newspapers***

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* & *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and, in *The Province* on Sundays.

#### ***Online Job Postings***

- **go2HR**  
<https://www.go2hr.ca/jobs>  
job board for tourism and hospitality jobs in BC
- **eightsix Hospitality Recruiting**  
<https://www.86network.com/search>
- **hcareers.ca**  
<https://www.hcareers.com/>
- **Hotellerie**  
<https://www.hotelleriejobs.com/en>
- **Indeed.com**  
[https://ca.indeed.com/advanced\\_search](https://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search)

### ***Finding "Hidden Jobs"***

Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below will help you *with finding jobs in this "hidden" job market.*

### ***Using Directories to Create a List of Potential Employers***

You can use company directories to produce lists of employers who are in the restaurant, food service and hospitality business. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **go2HR Tourism Companies**

<https://www.go2hr.ca/companies>

select the sector, 'Food & Beverage Services'

- **Tourism Vancouver Restaurant Listings**

<https://www.tourismvancouver.com/restaurants/>

- **Reference Canada**

<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>

Click on "Start Search" beside Canadian Businesses, then select the "Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "Restaurants"\*\*\* and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

\*\*\*You can also search for "Coffee shops", "Carry out Foods", "Bars", "Bars and Grills", "Pubs"

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

**NOTE:** *You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database.*

### ***Networking, Volunteering and Temporary Agencies***

Many positions are filled by people who have been recommended by someone they know. Networking, working as a volunteer or registering with a temporary employment agency are good ways of helping you find jobs and meet people in your industry.

***Networking and the Hidden Job Market:***

*When looking for work, be sure to talk to friends, relatives and neighbours. They may know someone who is hiring! Working as a volunteer, attending events, and joining clubs and associations are good ways to gain "Canadian experience." They are also good ways to meet people to learn about the local job market.*

***Volunteer opportunities***

▪ **Volunteer BC**

<https://volunteerbc.bc.ca/volunteer-now/>

▪ **Volunteer Connector**

<https://www.volunteerconnector.org/>

▪ **Salvation Army**

<https://salvationarmy.ca/volunteer/>

Volunteer opportunities may be available in the Salvation Army's meal programs, shelters, and transitional housing

▪ **Vancouver Coastal Health**

<http://www.vch.ca/get-involved/volunteer>

Vancouver Coastal Health is involved with several congregate meals programs and free/low cost meals programs that may require volunteers

*For additional tips see:*

▪ **Networking for Employment**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Networking for Employment]

▪ **Getting Canadian Work Experience**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

## 7. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your experience. Use the library catalogue, <http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

*For more information see:*

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

## 8. Where Can This Job Lead?

**Food & beverage servers:** with experience, you can move into higher-paying positions at larger, more formal food establishments. Opportunities to advance into supervisory or management positions are also possible, although further education, such as completion of a hospitality management program, may be necessary. With additional experience, you may also choose to own and run your own businesses.

**Bartenders:** With experience, you may be able to move into managerial positions in food and beverage service

## 9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **go2HR Career Explorer**

<https://www.go2hr.ca/career-explorer>

information on careers in BC's hospitality and tourism industry

- **Restaurants Canada**

<https://www.restaurantscanada.org/>

information on the restaurant and food service industry in BC and Canada

- **BC Restaurant & Foodservices Association**

<https://www.bcrfa.com>

information and news on the restaurant and food service industry in BC

- **BC Fastest Growing Industries: Tourism**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Tourism]

- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

***Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at the Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.***

*Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.*