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Toronto: Our favourite new spot for a (healthy) power lunch

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A working lunch is all too often an exercise in indulgence, crammed with cream and butter and overly salted. **Four** (187 Bay St., Toronto, 416-368-1444, fourtoronto.com), in Toronto's financial district, is a subterranean spot with the same frenzied lunch-hour crowd and cookie-cutter décor as your typical tower eatery, but its menu offers a different take that's both good and good for you. Every dish on the menu is 650 calories or less, achieved by grilling or steaming instead of frying, and cutting down on unhealthy fats and sugars. Chef Matt Rosen, who has cooked at Splendido and Eigensinn Farm and came on board at Four last year, says, "The haute cuisine style of food doesn't really speak to me. I like big, bold flavours and I've tried to do a more simple style of cooking."

But simple doesn't mean simplistic: The Persian squash soup is one of the coolest things I've eaten this year; a textural and totally delicious combination of spaghetti squash, minted yogurt and pearls of Israeli couscous that rings in at only 188 calories (not to suggest that obsessing over that number is any more healthful than lunching on fast food). Popular dishes like the crab and corn cakes, the spelt rigatoni with roasted mushrooms and goat cheese, the grilled Atlantic salmon with quinoa tabbouleh and the mini bison burger won't leave you with 3 p.m. cookie cravings—especially if you treat yourself to one of the dessert "shots," which are full-on indulgent concoctions like tiramisu and double chocolate cream downsized into 200-calorie-or-less packages. Whole, clean food served at a between-meetings pace—that's what I call a power lunch.

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