

NOTABLE EDIBLES



Dragonfly Cakes

The petit four is the perfect amount of cake. Small and delicate, it can satisfy even the most persistent dessert cravings. Petit fours, literally French for “little oven,” are so named because they were originally made from the pâtissier’s leftovers while their ovens cooled

at the end of the day’s baking. My memories of eating petit fours were dismal, as they were often pretty but exceedingly bland. That’s why I was so pleasantly surprised to taste the wonderful petit fours from Dragonfly Cakes in Sausalito. Dragonfly makes beautiful specimens, each one perfectly balanced between rich and light, with a touch of sweetness. Perfect for parties (or to send to your dad on Father’s Day), they are available online at www.dragonflycakes.com. 415.332.6812.

Marinitas

Marinitas... The word conjures up the sound of maracas—or a hot new dance—but it’s actually the name of one of Marin County’s hippest new restaurants. Heidi Krahlung and Patrick Coll, also owners of Insalata’s, the Mediterranean-inspired restaurant just two blocks down the street, have put their well-

honed restaurateur fingers on the zeitgeist of what people lust for in a happening watering hole. Artist Michael Brennan, known for his sensual, rustic environments in restaurants like Novato’s Boca Steak, decorated the cavernous space that holds more than 160 people. It’s all terra cotta walls with lots of stone, wood, brick and Mexican and Latin American-inspired artifacts. There are three communal tables and deep, cushiony booths. As for the cuisine, Krahlung has collaborated on an

interesting and inexpensive menu. No dish is more than \$17, and there are daily specials. Shrimp in a white garlic sauce is a must, as are fresh fish tacos, empanadas and, of course, the margaritas, created with a sweet and sour mix made from scratch. The bustling bar features 70 tequilas, along with other classic liquors. Marinitas is open daily for lunch and dinner, and offers a bar menu until midnight every night.

The bar is open until 1:00 AM during the week, 2:00 AM on weekends. 218 Sir Francis Drake Blvd., San Anselmo. Call 415.454.8900 or visit www.marinitas.net for reservations.



Bottega Ristorante

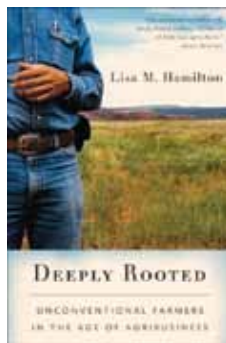
You’ve seen him on TV, used his cookbooks, and now you can visit Michael Chiarello, the Food Network personality, in person at his hot new restaurant in Yountville. Sophisticated and casual, Bottega Ristorante blends old wood and brick with Italian design and accents. The hip clientele tends to gravitate to the outside veranda that surrounds nearly the entire restaurant. Inside, the bar percolates with a mixed local and tourist crowd. You can spot the region’s winemakers sharing their latest release or swigging a beer, while tourists gasp at every Michael sighting. The menu is authentic Italian and features hand-rolled pasta, homemade mozzarella and creamy risotto. Local artisanal and house-made products dominate the ingredients list. Even at lunch, Chiarello meets and greets diners, then rushes back to join the line in the large, open kitchen. Everyone I know is charmed by the man, the space, and the wonderful food.

Lunch Tuesday–Sunday 11:30 AM–2:30 PM, Dinner Monday–Thursday 5:30–9:30 PM, Friday and Saturday 5:30–10:00 PM, and Sunday 5:00–9:30 PM. 6525 Washington St., Yountville (in the V marketplace). Call 707.945.1050 for reservations.



Deeply Rooted: Unconventional Farmers in the Age of Agribusiness

By Lisa M Hamilton
(Counterpoint LLC)



In her book, Mill Valley resident Hamilton asks: Why not look to the people who grow the food? In doing so, she writes about three farmers: in East Texas, North Dakota, and New Mexico, respectively, who tell stories about our food system from a farmer’s perspective. These three unconventional stories weave

together the history and current plight of farmers who’ve been pushed to the margins of agriculture in the age of large agribusiness. These remarkable characters make the case that, in order to correct what has gone wrong with the food system, we must first listen to the farmers. Visit www.lisamhamilton.com/ book for a list of local book signings this summer.

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Farm House Restaurant, Olema

Scott Dammann, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and the former Owner/Chef of Eastside West Restaurant in San Francisco, has recently taken over as Executive Chef at the Farm House Restaurant in Olema. Scott has completely re-vamped their menus to feature local, organic and sustainable ingredients.

The Farm House Restaurant is part of the Point Reyes Seashore Lodge, located at 10005 Hwy 1, Olema. Hours are 11:30 AM—9:00 PM Sunday through Thursday, and 11:30 AM—10:00 PM Friday and Saturday. 415.663.1264. www.pointreyesseashore.com



McEvoy Ranch—80 Acres Body Care

My aunt, who lived to be in her 90s but looked 70, swore that putting olive oil on your face each day kept you looking young. Now we can all test this theory: McEvoy Ranch recently launched a new line of body care products called 80 Acres Body Care which incorporates the carefully produced organic extra-virgin olive oil that the Ranch is famous for. The line is green in fragrance and was developed to mimic the taste of the Ranch's early-harvest oil. Named for the land on which the Ranch grew its first Tuscan olive trees nearly 20 years ago, the 80 Acres product line currently includes body lotion, body balm, olive oil soap and body wash.

www.mcevoyranch.com.



Behrens Family Winery

I have been wine tasting in a castle, cellar, wine cask and even a sod house, but never in a trailer. Napa's only tasting room housed in a vintage '47 Westcraft trailer is perched high atop Spring Mountain with a view of the valley floor below. This is home to the Behrens Family Winery tasting room on wheels. Indulge in an hour-long private tasting like none other in the valley, with a variety of wines that have scored in the 90s.

By appointment only (groups up to 8), 707.963.1774. robin@ernaschein.com.



An Organic Conservation

Every Saturday at 10AM (PDT), Helge Hellberg, executive director of Marin Organic, hosts a new hour long radio show, An Organic Conservation. The show covers social and environmental issues and the solutions that move society towards sustainable choices. An authority in the field of sustainable food production and human health, Hellberg engages his guests on the show in lively discussion. Each Saturday Dan McGovern, publisher of Sustainable Food News, kicks off the show with consumer-oriented weekly news, followed by an in-depth conversation with Hellberg about the most pressing topics of the week.

Listen on Saturdays on the Clear Channel affiliate Green 960am (www.Green960.com).

Osteria Stellina

Osteria Stellina opened last November in downtown Pt. Reyes and has been racking up accolades ever since, including receiving 3½ stars for its food from Michael Bauer of the San Francisco Chronicle in May. Chef and owner Christian Caiazzo, a West Marin resident, honed his skills at Union Square Café in New York and both Postrio and Globe in San Francisco, before coming home to open this very welcome addition to the West Marin dining scene. Caiazzo describes his food as “Pt. Reyes Italian.” His menu, which changes even more frequently than the seasons, reads like a mouth-watering travel log of West Marin and showcases the finest local producers and their wares, including wines. During one recent lunch, Chef Caiazzo delighted us with a thick slice of puffball mushroom, delivered to the back door just hours before by a local forager, which he



had prepared with a farm-fresh egg ala “toad in the hole.” The dish was nature elevated to the sublime. Good news for fans of Caiazzo’s out-of-this-world grilled cheese sandwiches sold from a stand at the Pt. Reyes Farmers’ Market during the summer—they’re now available at Osteria Stellina year round!

11285 Hwy 1, Pt. Reyes.
Open 11:30 AM–2:30 PM and
5–9 PM Wednesdays to Sundays;
closed Mondays and Tuesdays.
415.663.9988. www.osteriastellina.com

Sonoma Springs Brewing Company

In this paradise known as Wine Country, you sometimes just crave a beer. Sonoma Springs Brewing Company quenches that thirst. An oasis in these vine-filled valleys, this boutique brewery specializes in Bavarian-style beer with a selection of ales and lagers. In a nod to the “other” beverages made in Wine Country, the Hefeweizen is fermented for a week in chardonnay barrels. Don’t be surprised to rub elbows with local winemakers—after a long day of tasting wine, beer is their beverage of choice.

750 W. Napa Street (at 7th) in
Sonoma. 707.938.7422.



Picnic Table “To Go”

If picnicking on the grass isn’t your style, try this nifty folding wooden picnic table this summer. The table seats four adults but folds up easily into a small carrying case, making it the perfect fit for your Mini.

(Dimensions are 22 ¼” W x 14” H x 4 ½” D. 22 lbs.) \$149.95.
Available at the Tyler Florence Shop, Mill Valley.
www.tylerflorence.com. Visit www.picnicatascot.com to inquire about other retailers in this area.

The Children’s Garden Co.

The Children’s Garden Company, located on an historic five-acre farm close to the downtown Sonoma Square, is a newly opened agricultural “club” for children. Kids will experience the joys of organic gardening, from planting, growing and composting, to harvesting and eating fresh fruits and vegetables. Louise Hassen, Founder and Chief Gardener, will teach the children how to plant, tend and then harvest the crops from their own 4’x 8’ plot of the garden. They may also help care for rabbits and chickens living on the property. Not only will your children go home with seasonal, fresh and organic vegetables, fruits and flowers, they’ll have gained both a greater understanding of where their food comes from and a connection to the earth. The junior gardeners may also choose to donate some of their bounty to a local food bank or sell it at the club’s roadside farm stand. Parents may drop their kids off for each two-hour session or stay and garden with them, making it a family affair.

www.childrengardenco.com.

