
TIDBITES

BY KATHLEEN MACKINTOSH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY EDMUND REK



ALBALISA GOURMET FOOD TORTILLAS

Toronto has been called the most ethnically diverse city in the world which means, luckily for us, that we have access to foods and flavours from across the globe. What's even better is that these global flavours are often created using local ingredients in our own province. AlbaLisa Gourmet Tortillas are a perfect example.

In her past life as a teacher, Alba Lisa taught in primary schools around the world while travelling with her husband – and her tortilla press. While she enjoyed the world of flavours the experience put on their table, the beloved tortillas of her Mexican birthplace remained a part of every meal, and she enjoyed sharing them with the locals wherever they found themselves. Back in Toronto, Alba connected with the Toronto Food Business Incubator Program in 2008 to take her passion for sharing tortillas one step further, this time with Torontonians.

AlbaLisa Gourmet Food Rustic Corn Tortillas and Flour Tortillas are prepared without preservatives, artificial colourings, additives or hydrogenated oils. What they do contain is fewer than five ingredients, Ontario-grown flour, and lots of love and passion.

These 6-inch par-baked rounds are pure delight. Simply heat them in a dry skillet for twenty seconds on each side and stuff with your favourite fillings. Try ground beef or chicken, salsa, cheese and sour cream, or just let your imagination run wild.

AlbaLisa tortillas are available at Fiesta Farms, Dish Cooking Studio, Culinarium, Pusateri's, Rowe Farms, Harbord Bakery, Nancy's Cheese, Frida Mexican Restaurant, and The Healthy Butcher.

AlbaLisa Gourmet Food
www.albalisagourmetfood.com
(647) 346-1463

EVELYN'S CRACKERS

Most crackers are merely used as a platform on which to serve cheese or condiments, but not Evelyn's Crackers. The Toronto-based company's Salty Oats are flaky and tender with a slightly salty tang and a touch of oaty sweetness, and they can stand alone, no cheese required. Their Spicy Dal Spelt Sticks are made with chickpea and spelt flours and are highly recommended as a delightful substitute for pita when paired with hummus, baba ganoush, or any Mediterranean-inspired dips.

Dawn Woodward, Edmund Rek, and their young daughter Evelyn are the family behind Evelyn's Crackers. Dawn is a professional baker, consummate world traveller and passionate supporter of local food. Her crackers are inspired by her travels and she only uses Ontario-grown organic grains – Red Fife, spelt, oats, rye and barley flours – as well as local honey for sweetening. Healthful ingredients aside, these distinctive crackers are sophisticated enough for a dinner party, but carry plenty of kid-appeal, too. Dawn, Edmund and Evelyn are building and feeding a local community one cracker at a time!

Evelyn's Crackers are available at the Green Barn Farmers' Market, About Cheese, The Healthy Butcher, Fiesta Farms, The Big Carrot, Grain Curd and Bean, Mabel's Bakery & Specialty Foods, Organic Boutique, Culinarium, and Pantry.

Evelyn's Crackers
www.evelynscrackers.com
(647) 448-0731



Kathleen Mackintosh is a professional home economist living in Toronto. In her past life she developed and edited recipes, conducted cooking demonstrations, and originated large-scale food events. In her most recent food adventure, Kathleen has founded Culinarium (www.culinarium.ca), a gourmet grocery market and locavore food haven that exclusively features foods made in Ontario. A dedicated foodie, you can find Kathleen chopping, crunching, munching, tasting or talking about food at every opportunity.



HARVEST CRAFTERS GOURMET PRESERVES

Harvest Crafters Gourmet Preserves are an excellent example of quality products that are made possible when business-savvy urbanites pair up with their rural counterparts, the keepers of the land – in this case, Ontario farmers.

Jim O'Neill of Ancaster teamed up with the Martins, a Mennonite family in Elora, to create a line of delicious no-sugar-added fruit preserves, as well as apple butters, pepper jellies and drizzles. The Martins built a registered kitchen facility on their land for the local Mennonite community to use. (Interestingly, although the Martins own the facility, the entire community is entitled to provide input into how it is used.) Together, O'Neill, the Martins, and the Elora Mennonite community have formed a symbiotic relationship dedicated to creating Harvest Crafters' full flavoured preserves. Jim heads up the marketing and sales outside the Mennonite community, the Martins and their nine children create the delicious preserves, and the local farming community's harvest and resources are put to productive, profit-generating uses.

The Martin family uses apple purée made by the Mennonite community as the primary sweetener and base for the line of no-sugar spreads. What makes these preserves stand out is the full flavours delivered by the other fruits in the mix: the apple purée in no way dilutes the intense flavours of the blueberry, raspberry, strawberry or bumbleberry deliciousness I like to slather on my morning toast. These spreads are also delectable when used as sweeteners in fruit desserts, as cheesecake toppings, in smoothies, paired with cream cheese and crackers, or just eaten off a spoon!

Harvest Crafters Gourmet Preserves are available at Culinarium in Toronto, Buncha Farmers in Queensville, Cooke's Fine Foods & Coffee in Kingston, County Food Co. in Stratford, Kingsmill's in London, and Vincenzo's in Kitchener.

Harvest Crafters Gourmet Preserves

www.harvestcrafters.com
(877) 939-0969

Readers' Reflections

Editor's Note: We welcome your reflections and comments. Please email your letters to editor@edibletoronto.com, entering *Readers' Reflections* in the subject line, and be sure to include your full name and daytime phone number. We regret that we are not able to publish every letter we receive.

Received by email January 30, 2009
Subject: "What a Great Magazine!"

Gail,

I pick up your magazine at Fiesta Farms as soon as I see a new one in the rack and take it home to savour. I read it slowly and cover to cover. Sometimes twice. With most media telling me the horror stories, your magazine inspires me and brings me hope about our ability as a species to survive and treasure the values that are really important – "comfort, harmony, wholesomeness, family values – all of which feed our soul" (your words, with my arrangement of them, from the Winter '08 magazine).

Thank you, thank you, thank you for starting this magazine. I'm already looking for the spring edition

Anne

Katherine-Anne Skinner, BFA, BA, M.Ed.
Visioning Your Being... Being Your Vision

