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Contact: Ann Cooper, Dept of Tourism
1-800-724-1846

Garden of Eating Tour travels to restaurants, farms, markets

Columbia, Albany and Rensselaer Counties, in collaboration with ILOVENY, Hudson Valley Tourism, Cornell Cooperative Extension and Columbia County Bountiful, have created A Trip to Bountiful, 1st Annual Garden of Eating Tour.

This one-week, self-guided driving tour runs from Monday, September 15 through Sunday, September 21, and features delicious, creative dishes made from local fare. Dozens of restaurants spanning the three counties celebrate the harvest season in full swing by creating specialty dishes emphasizing locally-grown ingredients.

In Columbia County alone, 27 restaurants have signed on to participate, from Ca'Mea, Mexican Radio, Red Dot, Tanzy's and Cascades in Hudson to Blue Plate, Destino, Lippera's and Our Daily Bread in Chatham, The Pillars in New Lebanon and Swiss Hutte in Hillsdale, and many more in between.

Offerings run from Spencertown Country Store's potato pancakes with apple-plum sauce, as well as a salad with pears and cheese to Red Barn's Chilled Beet Soup, Chilled Cucumber Soup, Sweet Corn Chowder (hot), Lettuce Wedge with Old Chatham Shepherding Ewe's Blue Cheese Dressing, Grazin Angus Acres Black Angus Hamburgers/Cheeseburgers and Pork Chops with Columbia County Apple Chutney. On Vico's menu is Bistecca Fiorentina: Black Angus Porterhouse or T-Bone steak, Pollo Toscano, and Torta di Verdura, all made from ingredients grown on local farms, like their Insalata Caprese, home-made mozzarella from Gumaer Farm milk, heirloom tomatoes and basil from Elysian Field.

Consumers can follow the trail of artisanal cheeses, vegetables and fruits, meats, breads, wines, beers and even local apple vodka as they work their way through the wonders of family-owned farms, vineyards and orchards to the tables of tastiest fare.

It is an opportunity to pick your own fruits and vegetables, visit dozens of farmstands and markets, stop into country stores for honeys, maple syrups, baked goods and more. From alpaca farms to distilleries, corncakes to apple cider donuts, this first-ever cross-county collaboration brings together the finest the Capital Region has to offer, providing a unique window into the heart of the local food and farming communities.

For details, go to www.GardenofEatingTour.com or call 1-800-258-3582. A Trip to Bountiful Garden of Eating Tour is a collaboration of Columbia County Bounty (columbiacountybounty.com), Cornell Cooperative Extension, the Albany County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Albany, Columbia (bestcountryroads.com) and Rensselaer County (rensco.com) Tourism Promotion Agencies