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Authentic, hands-on food tourism is going from strength to strength

Singing regional praises

TASTY BITS

IF you have a favourite potato recipe Yvonne Downes wants to hear about it pronto for a book she is putting together for the Gunns Plains Potato Festival on November 1 this year.

Recipes for breads, pancakes, scones and more featuring spuds that have won prizes at past festivals will be included. If you have a recipe that deserves a place get it to Yvonne at ennovyar@speedlink.com.au. Tell her a little bit about the background of the recipe too.

French event

CELEBRATE Bastille Day on July 14 with a truffle degustation dinner at the Wursthaus Kitchen in Salamanca. Chefs are Simon Webster and Sonya Magasin and there are French and Tasmanian wines to match. The menu is on the Wursthaus website. It costs \$150. Book by phoning 6223 0644.

Duck delights

THE Cornelian Bay Boat House Great Duck Dinner will be held on July 16.

It costs \$85 for the five-course dinner or \$140 with a matched flight of wines. Book by phoning 6228 9289. The Boat House is also holding its Winter Mini Mondays — three courses for \$35. Bookings essential.

REGIONALITY does not come from high-end restaurants," Zannie Flanagan tells a food tourism summit at Tasting Australia in Adelaide, paying credit to the Willunga farmers market as the basis for "the creation and visibility of culinary regionalism" of the Fleurieu Peninsula in South Australia.

"Such a marketplace is not created in and of itself for tourists," Flanagan said.

"It is an authentic local activity with a unique and distinctive local flavour that survives because of and for the local community — and this is what the tourists want."

Flanagan, who at one stage was a frequent visitor to Tasmania to judge olive oils, founded the Willunga Market in 2002 — South Australia's first farmers market — and then went on to establish the Adelaide Showground farmers market.

Recently she was made a Member of the Order of Australia for promoting regional produce.

By her reckoning, the Tas Farm Gate Market in Melville St, Hobart every Sunday is a bigger draw for tourists looking for an "authentic" Tasmanian experience than the exotic culinary adventurousness of Savour Tasmania.

"Authentic" and "hands-on" are the new buzz words in food tourism as people look for an experience or skill to take home.

We have our high-end cooking experiences in the Agrarian Kitchen at New Norfolk and the Red Feather Inn at Hadsden, but probably could do more in the way of quicker, cheaper workshops, along the lines of the occasional walk-in classes at the Salmon Shop in Salamanca Square.

At Willunga farmers market every Saturday, you will find Beach Organics where Barry Beach sells bread that's baked in a mudbrick wood-fired oven, fruit and vegetables he grows on a 4ha permaculture property and spices, honey, salt and sugar brought in from the Traditional Farmers network that he supports in Indonesia.

You can take the experience further by attending a one-day course on how to set up your own organic garden at the farm at Middleton, or take a master class or half-day class in making sourdough bread.

Earlier, I wrote about hands-on classes ranging from an hour to a couple of days in

making cider, olive oil, cheese and more at Producers of McLaren Vale which Tori Moreton says she started because she so enjoyed this sort of tourism in Spain and France.

In the Barossa Valley, the familiar wine trail brochure has been embellished — it's a Butcher, Baker and Winemaker Trail, which you can negotiate at will, or with the aid of a hired GPS unit.

Or you can pay \$65 for a hamper and wander the region topping it up. The brochure lists 24 picnic spots throughout the region where you can stop to eat what you have bought.

The town of Tanunda boasts six wineries. Even the police station has a sign up — Cell door open. It's also the home of the Tanunda and Apex German bakeries.

AT Angaston, you can access many of the region's food producers every Saturday at the Barossa farmers market.

Saskia Beer (daughter of Maggie) sells her free-range chooks; the much-lauded Careme Pastry has a stall selling pies, pastries and bread; Gratton Lowke sells baby carrots and parsnips — the result of 50 years as a gardener; and David West is the latest owner of Wiech's Barossa Valley Egg Noodles.

Angaston is also the home of Schulz's — a butcher and smallgoods outlet established 70 years ago, and one that still uses the methods Franz Knoll had passed on to him by two generations of German butchers. The shop started at what is now Turkey Flat Vineyards at Tanunda, where you can still see the original butcher's block in the old shop that's now the cellar door.

Salamanca Market has long been on visitors' must-go-to list, and Tas Farm Gate has the same advantage of being held every week on a Sunday.

Burnie (on the first and third Saturday of the month) and Wynyard (on the second and fourth Saturdays) also have farmers markets that go throughout the year, but it is rather difficult to keep tourists abreast of little markets held once a month, every other week, or only in summer.

Judbury in the Huon Valley has a wonderful little food market once a month in summer but it would be just about impossible to just stumble upon it. It would be



MARKET FOUNDER: Zannie Flanagan with Hannah Bakewell, left, and Georgia Burr. Flanagan has an impressive background promoting regional produce.

good to provide tourists with a list of the many good food shops in the state. Visitors have a good chance of simply coming across the Wursthaus Kitchen in Hobart or the House of Anvers in Latrobe. But they are less likely to happen upon Hill Street in West Hobart or Black Forest Smallgoods in Launceston.

In the Huon Valley, visitors can pick up a Huon Food Trail brochure that gives simple seasonal recipes that can be executed in tourist accommodation and tells you the places to buy the ingredients.

Other regions could do with similar guidance. Buying provisions for a picnic can be necessary in some parts.

There are few places to eat in the Pipers Brook and the Tamar wine regions — Daniel Alps at Strathlynn is not centrally placed for a circuit of the wineries. Some classy takeaways are in order, and

non-locals need some help on where to go for such provisions.

Flanagan said local restaurant menus must reflect the landscape in which they were situated if visitors were to have an authentic taste of a place.

But so must "local food be on the tables of the people who live in the region".

"If the food we produce is being shipped out of the region and any regional identification is being lost in the distribution chain there is no payback for the local effort," she said.

Last year nearly 250,000 visitors responding to the Tasmanian Visitor Survey gave "visiting friends and family" as the reason for coming here — that equates to many home-cooked meals I imagine. Food that Tasmania is famous for should be readily available — let's celebrate it in restaurants and on home tables.

PEPPERMINT BAY

will be closed for renovations and maintenance from Monday July 05th – Sunday July 25th

Reopening Monday 26th with a new menu and fresh feel.

Bookings 03 6267 4088



Peppermint Bay: Channel Hwy, Woodbridge
www.peppermintbay.com.au