

Taste of Guelph – Appetizers

Published in “A Taste of Guelph”

Supplement to The Guelph Mercury, September 20, 1998

From bruschetta to beef, salmon to sunflower stars - your taste buds will be in for a wild, exciting ride when about 20 area restaurants and participating wineries and breweries set up their stations for the first **Taste of Guelph**. Gourmets in all guises will mingle under the tents and in the gardens surrounding Riverslea Mansion at the Homewood Health Centre, sampling everything from bison meatballs to sun dried tomato bread with goat's cheese, all in support of Guelph's three hospital Foundations.

What to expect? Variety, colour, tastes you never knew existed, all at your fingertips, ready to be savoured, sipped and swallowed. Here's a sample of what's in store.

The setting may be “casual elegance,” but you'll still be able to get comfortable in the style of your basic backyard barbeque with “Bad to the Bone Ribs, Corn and Beans” from chef Kadi Belghaba at the **Red Devil Barbeque and Tavern** in Guelph. With a b.b.q. sauce that includes molasses, Dijon, and Jack Daniel's among its zesty ingredients, these ribs will leave you asking for more.

Pasta lovers will want to seek out the “Chilean Pasta Salad”, from **Latino's** chefs Libertad Paez and Claudia Paez. The combination of herbs and spices create an unmistakably Latin American taste, with a bit of a punch from some crushed hot chilies.

The Cutten Club's chef Stephen Vaughan will prepare a succulent dish whose name alone evokes every colour of the taste palette: “Rum and Pepper Painted Salmon with a Mango Habanero Coulis.” The “paint” of the title includes peppercorns, lemon zest and black rum among other treats, and the mango and habanero coulis gets some help from an ambrosial blend of lemon, orange and riesling.

Those looking for Vegan cuisine can make their way to the **Cafe Aquarius** tasting station. Specializing in vegetarian fare with international inspiration, Guelph chefs Katie Miller and Emily Kleine will offer “Sunflower Stars”, a combination of tofu-based crackers served with a piquant paté blended from tamari, onion, sweet potato, sunflower seeds, garlic, ginger and cumin.

If the name of their restaurant doesn't immediately captivate you, then **Cafe Insomnia** chefs Elia Pigozzo and Dario DeRenzo are sure to reel you in with their “Pasta Shell Stuffed with Ricotta Cheese.” Specializing in homemade Italian cuisine, they will satisfy that craving for pasta with this deceptively simple recipe.

The variety of cuisines and chefs means there will be something for every taste. Exotic offerings such as “Spiced Cassava Chips” from Tim Halley at **The Other Brother’s** in Guelph rely on unusual ingredients such as the crisp white meat of the African vegetable of the recipe’s title. Those who need some meat on their plates will be compelled to check out the intriguingly named “Bison/Beef Meatballs in BBQ-Beer Sauce” from chef Andrew Robinson at **The Woolwich Arms Pub and Restaurant**. And who will be able to resist the “Grilled Angus Summer Vegsalsa Napoleon” medallions of beef tenderloin smothered with a grilled vegetable salsa, created by chefs Rob and John Harcourt of the **Babel Fish Bistro**. The rich, familiar flavour of Maple Syrup is one of the key ingredients in **Holiday Inn’s** chef Brian Clifton’s pork medallion recipe. David McRae and David Shmeller of **The Black Mustard** combine chicken with onions, wine, lemons and a whole rack of spice to produce “Moroccan Chicken in Phyllo Tulip.”

Catering specialists **Appetizingly Yours** will be offering chef Jim Loat’s luscious “Grilled Polenta with Chevre/Sage Butter and Autumn Vegetables in Sundried Tomato/Roasted Garlic Vinaigrette”. **Blue Ribbon Specialty Foods** take the Italian route, creating “Zesty Broschetta with Roasted Corn and Peppers.” There will be no shortage of fabulous meatless recipes for the vegetarians in the crowd.

Of course it doesn’t stop there. **Don’s Produce** will be on hand with the crisp, delicious and always pleasing “Fresh Vegetables with Dip”. What will your eager tastebuds say about “Sundried Tomato Bread with Goat Cheese” from **Black Bird Baked Goods**?

These are only some of the restaurants and their creative chefs who will be out to tempt and tantalize at **Taste of Guelph**. There will be succulent surprises from other participating restaurants and chefs including Peter Egger, chef at **The Breadalbane Inn** and **Belwood Schoolhouse**, Thomas and Brenda Aldridge of **Manhattans**, and Patricia and George Giovinazzo of **Buonissimo Catering**.

And guests should be aware that food is not the only item on the menu. For those who need to sip a little something between bites, refreshing samples will also be available from local wineries and micro-breweries including **Stoney Ridge Winery**, **Brick Brewing**, **F & M Brewery**, **Sleeman Brewing and Malting**, and **Wellington County Brewery**.

Your tastebuds will thank you, after they’ve recovered from the deluge of fantastic recipes they encounter at the first **Taste of Guelph**.
