

Locally Made Treats

By Deborah Palmer Photos by Mike Davis

We support the wisdom of shopping for foods grown locally and in season as much as possible. Time was when oranges and figs were exotic treats to have only around Christmas. If you wanted fruit through the winter you were looking at cans or preserves. Although we enjoy the wide variety of fresh produce available all year, it's great to seek out dedicated producers of food close to home. In the cooler months, we focus on bottles, jars and packages of prepared products. Here is a collection of goodies, in alphabetical order, that we found fairly close to the Escarpment. We had fun sharing and enjoying them with family, friends and neighbours. We taste-tested and sampled and now share our findings with you, believing that we're introducing some very special creations of rare quality. And please let us know of the local treats that you love.

Dutchman's Gold Natural Honey and Products, Carlisle

John and Annie Van Alten and family must be supremely happy people with

very contented bees. Just a flight through their entertaining and enlightening Web site should make you happy. After taking their online quiz, you may feel so hungry that you'll need to make toast with honey. Unlike some other blends of honey, these homegrown and homefed bees make honey bursting with flavour. Their Ancaster Flower Honey is particularly enjoyable. Pancakes are a good choice for tasting the flowery nuances these Canadian bees provide. Their own beautiful store offers a rich treasure of products, but their honey may also be available close to your home.

LOCATIONS INCLUDE: Horn of Plenty, Dundas; Foodstuffs, Georgetown; Stone Store, Guelph; Denningers, Hamilton & Burlington; Andrews Scenic Acres, Milton; Natural Choice, Orangeville; Longo's; most Sobey's and IGA.

MORE INFORMATION: www.DutchmansGold.com

From These Roots, Fergus

Krista Harrington describes her work as tearing up her parents' property for gardens, and having years of culinary adventure and misadventure. This sounds like happy employment for an imaginative and creative foodie! From These Roots jams and salsas are richly flavoured and lusciously exotic. It takes a master palate

to create new flavours so unusual and satisfying.

A delicious pairing of soft Goat's Cheese with Rosemary Biscuits makes a wonderful partner with Raspberry Rosemary Jam, matching sweet and tart with savoury and soft flavours. A glass of wine or a cup of tea makes a perfectly lovely accompaniment.

My true love though, is the Blackcurrant and Violet Jam. So Victorian! Occasionally a little sweet can take subtle flavours much further. To this end cut a tiny morsel

of very decadent brownie, top with a small dollop of Blackcurrant Violet Jam ... now we all have very good reason to keep these two together

in bliss. These jams are so heady and original, you need to give your mouth a moment to enjoy the experience.



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Dutchman's Gold Natural Honey and Products



From These Roots



Lovely Bites Specialty Cookies



Tracy's Wine Jellies



The Ultimate Bean Coffee

LOCATIONS INCLUDE: MacMillan's, Acton, Royal Botanical Gardens, Burlington; Busy Liz's, Campbellville; Elora General Store, Elora; Fraberts Fresh Foods, Fergus; Foodstuffs, Georgetown; Creative Edge, Guelph; Oakville Gift Shop, Oakville.

MORE INFORMATION: www.FromTheseRoots.ca

Lakeview Cellars, Vineland

Loving these exceptional private-label wine jellies was easy. The two we sampled were a little spicy, just my flavour. Trying these was a case of my favourite and my other favourite.

The Cracked Black Pepper Cabernet Jelly was striking in its peppery scent and flavour. This jelly was so delicious, a spoon was my favourite accompaniment, though both robust and more delicate cheeses were very happy in its company. Toasted walnuts, red grapes, and plain crackers were perfect too.

Those tiny tarts we all love around Christmas time would be more lovely with Cracked Black Pepper Cabernet Jelly, or get a little reckless and use this jelly when making appetizer meatballs for instant fame. Your guests will know the kind of longing for meatballs only you can quench. A glass of wine is in perfect company with the Cracked Black Pepper Cabernet Jelly too. The Red Pepper Icewine Jelly is deliciously exciting. A room-temperature Goat's Cheese Brie would be a superb partner served with warmed

Red Pepper Icewine Jelly spooned over. Very good baguette with soft crumb would complete this enjoyably decadent mixture. Serving with two soft textures showcases the bite of pepper, and the clean ice wine taste is only highlighted by it.

LOCATIONS INCLUDE: Lakeview Cellars, Vineland.

MORE INFORMATION: www.lakeviewcellars.ca

Lovely Bites Specialty Cookies, Georgetown

Midnight Snacks, Mapples, and Leftovers are the names of three of the best cookies you may ever try. Only a few very high-quality ingredients, most of them organic, go into Kim Falls' original-recipe cookies. Made in small batches, the cookies are wheat-free and use organic butter and eggs as well as maple syrup and apple butter to sweeten. Most impressive are the Giant Cookies she prepares, often at special request. With a fun designer label, the cookies come in clear bags of six or 12.

LOCATION: Foodstuffs, Georgetown

MORE INFORMATION: 905 877 6569

Tracy's Wine Jellies, Niagara-on-the-Lake

Tracy Hanson uses Pillitteri wines in her exceptionally clean and fresh tasting jellies. With the chance to sample several of her jellies, and share

them with delighted friends, we tried a different approach. The test food was a Dutch Baby, or Giant Puffy Pancake, which is oven baked and looks like an oversized Yorkshire Pudding. Filled with sautéed local pears, and added to a luxurious helping of Tracy's Apple Cinnamon Chardonnay Jelly, it was worth savouring. An uplifting aroma assailed us, and with every bite of our Dutch Baby, we tasted those clear and lovely flavours all the way through. The flavour of the jellies alone are first and foremost of the wines.

Adding Tracy's Saucy Sangria Jelly to a Black Bean and Beef Chili just before serving gave a subtle scent and flavour which enhanced that chili right into double-diamond approval.

LOCATIONS INCLUDE: Mickey McGuire's Cheese, Dundas; Kittling Ridge, Grimsby; Upper Canada Cheese Company, Jordan; several outlets in Niagara-on-the-Lake, including Greaves; Harvest Barn, St. Catharines; Punch Bowl, Stoney Creek; Sunshine on a Cloudy Day, Wasaga Beach.

MORE INFORMATION: www.tracyswinejellies.com

The Ultimate Bean Coffee Roasting Company, Georgetown

The Ultimate Bean roasts and distributes guaranteed Fair Trade coffee from Latin America, Africa and Asia. They also provide a roast-your-own option. Fondly famous to their fans, Grant and Virna always display that love and passion great producers have for their work. They are always conscious of the good that Fair Trade can do for growers and their employees.

Here is Virna's description: "Grant takes the green beans that farmers in coffee-growing regions work so hard to produce and through skilful roasting delivers the uniqueness that each origin bean has to offer. If you close your eyes and take in the aroma of a fresh-roasted, fresh-ground and fresh-brewed cup of Ultimate Bean coffee, you can smell the air, the fruit and the fragrances of the land from where it comes."

In my opinion, theirs is the best coffee you can find. I suggest that you try strong brewed coffee in your marinades and basting sauces next barbeque season.

LOCATIONS INCLUDE: Penhaligan's of Elora, Elora; Foodstuffs, Georgetown; Guelph Farmer's Market, Guelph; Kerr Frames & Gallery, Oakville; Terra Cotta General Store, Terra Cotta.

MORE INFORMATION: www.theultimatebean.com

Deborah Palmer of A Movable Feast at Foodstuffs' 87 Up, Georgetown, has more than 20 years of experience as a chef, caterer and cooking teacher, drawing on first-hand experiences from her extensive travels around the world.