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Musings on food, family, friends and growing greens

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IACP Conference: 5 Portland Picks

by Sarah Henry on [April 28, 2010](#) · [24 comments](#)

in [food events](#), [food organizations](#)



PDX, Portland, Stumptown, whatever you want to call the pretty, green Pacific Northwest city, it's got a lot going for it on the food and farming front.

Following up on my first post on the [International Association of Culinary Professionals Conference](#), I wanted to tell you about some of the best and brightest of the local brigade.

It was an action-packed few days, so there wasn't much time to run around town exploring on my own. Thankfully, conference organizers (and veterans of conferences past) did a stellar job bringing Portland's finest foodsters, farmers, and food policy folks to my attention.

Before I share this second course of IACP conference offerings with you, can I just say that the [Portland Farmers' Market](#) on Saturday nearly knocked my socks off? Radishes the size of beets, an array of fragrant, foraged mushrooms (including morels, hedgehogs, and fiddleheads), and thick-stemmed, crimson-red rhubarb begging to be stewed.

Oh, and this market is filled to the gills with treats from artisan bakeries for mere pennies, which amazes a gal used to Bay Area farmers' market exxy prices for pastries. Those pint-sized bites of creamy goodness from [Two Tarts Bakery](#) even tasted terrific after getting all squished in the old carry-on bag (should have brought

home a box of these little lovelies).

No wonder PDX has gotten the nod from various mags as one of the best — if not THE best — farmers' market in the country.

Five short bites featuring Portland food picks:



- Piper Davis gave a small group of cookbook authors a behind-the-scenes look at her [Grand Central Bakery](#), named one of the top ten bakeries by *Bon Appetit*. Over a breakfast of fabulously flaky pastries and sunny side eggs atop brioche and seasonal greens, she gave us her down-to-earth spiel about the need to treat workers well, source sustainably, and eat good food. All delivered in the wee hours of the morning, from a statuesque blonde in braids with a serious commitment to local food and a healthy sense of humor. Portland is packed with killer bakeries. What's with that? Maybe it's the water — or the weather, which makes it pretty conducive to curling up with something warm straight out of the oven.
- Sustainable ag expert [Deborah Kane](#) of nonprofit [Ecotrust](#) detailed a new program called [FoodHub](#), a kind of Craig's List for the food and farm world, which helps farmers, ranchers, fishermen, and distributors connect with chefs, grocers, and other food buyers. [FoodHub](#), recently rolled out in several Pacific Northwest states, could serve as a food distribution model for the country. Read more about FoodHub in [The Oregonian](#).
- *Willamette Week*'s 3rd annual [Eat Mobile Festival](#) featured 30 of Portland's most popular food carts, dishing up savory and sweet eats under the Morrison Bridge and showcasing the local alternative food scene in all its goofy glory. Drank a divine smoothie from [Sip](#) with kale, spinach, pineapple, coconut oil, and agave. Ate a warm and soothing Bosnian flatbread sandwich with a zippy grilled veggie condiment, courtesy of [Ziba's Pitas](#). Loved the portable wood-fired pizza oven and crusty pie with caramelized onions from [Pyro Pizza](#). Nibbled [Lu Lu's Confections](#) baked goodies, I believe she calls her chocolate sandwich concoction the Holy Wow. Seems apt. Can you believe I went for dinner shortly after foraging from these food carts?
- [Linda Colwell](#), of eat. think. grow., works with Portland public schools to integrate food and farming into school curriculum. The founder of the [Garden of Wonders](#) at Abernethy Elementary School and the [Abernethy Scratch Kitchen](#) dished up tips on how to grow such a movement elsewhere around the country.



- Farmer-food historian-philosopher [Anthony Boutard](#), who runs Ayers Creek Farm with his wife Carol, described the beauty of fruit like nobody's business, in conversation with [Deborah Madison](#), acclaimed cookbook author who shares recipes in her latest book *Seasonal Fruit Desserts*. "Whoever named Cascade Dawn raspberries after two detergents has a tin ear," jokes Anthony, of the hand-picked berries he favors.

Okay Portland food fans, now it's your turn. Chime in with your favorite street eats, bakery bites, farm produce, food innovation, or chowhound and tell me why you love them so.

Photo of Piper Laurie, courtesy of Grand Central Bakery. Photo of Anthony and Carol Boutard by Anthony Boutard.

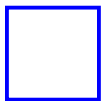
Big thanks to cookbook author [Jill O'Connor](#), who organized the bakery tour.

Next: Five global gourmet picks from the IACP Conference in Portland.



Tagged as: [Anthony Boutard](#), [Ayers Creek Farm](#), [Deborah Kane](#), [deborah madison](#), [Eat Mobile Festival](#), [FoodHub](#), [Garden of Wonders](#), [Grand Central Bakery](#), [International Association of Culinary Professionals](#), [Linda Colwell](#), [Lu Lu's Confections](#), [Piper Davis](#), [Portland Farmers Market](#), [Portland food carts](#), [Pyro Pizza](#), [Sip Juice Cart](#), [Two Tarts Bakery](#), [Ziba's Pitas](#)

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[domenica April 28, 2010 at 3:01 pm](#)

Loved the cheese and the spinach burek at Ziba's Pitas, esp with that red pepper sauce. Favorite meals were lunch at Nostrana (pizza, radicchio caesar, fried razor clams) and lunch at Olympic Provisions, esp the charcuterie & a delicious salad of fresh peas and paper-thin radish slices. p.s. enjoyed meeting you at dinner at Higgins, though in terms of food that was not my favorite meal!

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[Sarah Henry April 28, 2010 at 6:03 pm](#)

Lovely to meet you too, Domenica. Sounds like we're on the same page on the food front. The chef from Nostrana, Cathy Whims, made a killer morel soup for the farm dinner. Divine.