



Slow Food Cycle Sunday

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LEADING CHEFS STEP OUT OF THE KITCHEN FOR A DATE AT THE FARM

Allies of primary producers join movement to grow connections at Pemberton's signature agritourism event, August 18 & 19

August 14, 2007 – Pemberton, BC –

A Critical Mass of a different kind is taking place in Pemberton, 30km north of Whistler, this weekend, August 18 and 19.

Slow Food Cycle Sunday, Pemberton's signature agritourism event, will see the fastest growing town in BC double its population overnight, as 2000 cyclists land in mass peloton, to pedal and graze their way along a 26km stretch of farmland.

Throwing their weight behind the event, which aims to shorten the distance between food and table, between grower and consumer, are the natural allies of primary producers – those used to spinning something substantial from just the most elemental ingredients - artists, writers, chefs and families. Not to mention Olympic organizing committees, future Olympians, search and rescue pros, canoeists, and First Nations communities...

All-star chefs Rob Clark from C restaurant, James Walt of Araxi (fresh from his stint with the Canadian Ambassador in Rome), and Slow Food Whistler members Grant Cousar and Rich Blake from Whistler Cooks, will step out from behind the stainless steel countertops on the busiest evening of the week, to take up residence in the barn-cum-kitchen of 2006 Chefs' Table Society of BC Top Producers, Helmers Organic Farm. A harvest feast resembling a 100 METRE diet will be served to over 60 guests, including 100 Mile Dieters James MacKinnon and Alisa Smith. The Saturday evening dinner is a fundraiser for the free community event the following day.

The bike-ride on Sunday will launch at 9am with a free talk with best-selling authors MacKinnon and Smith about their adventures in local eating at the Pemberton Library.

The event sees 15 local farms throw the gates wide and host artisans, chefs and musicians for a Farmers Market turned inside-out. Pedalling participants, ranging in age from trailer-hauled tots to the grey-haired, can fuel their ride with fresh seasonal local fare like

Pemberton Valley Coffee Company's brew, pumpkin doughnuts from Whistler's Own Bake Shop, a potato showcase prepared by Whistler Cooks!, Indian cook Nidi Raini dueling with Araxi's chef James Walt in a celebration of the spud, Pemberton Meadows Natural Beef burgers, vegan samples combining garden-fresh produce with Sheese, a cheese substitute, roasted corn, sorbet, traditional bannock and soapberry juice, delectable cinnamon buns from Simply Delicious Baking, Big Smoke BBQ's pulled pork sandwiches... Local restaurants are getting into the local produce game, too, with the Wildwood partnering with farmers Andrea & Marty van Loon, to host a sit-down lunch at the top of the Valley.

Garden walks with herbalist Evelyn Coggins will leave from Helmers Organic Farms. Delores Los treats visitors to bubblegum honey fresh from the hive and introduces them to the alpacas that provide her with wool to knit socks and sweaters. River of Golden Dreams Canoe Tours will be offering a pedal/paddle combo trip, floating a select number of riders down the Lillooet River, where they'll be met by their bicycles, and able to continue on with the ride. Whistler Dog-sledding invites families to meet their newest employees, Eeny, Meeny, Miny and Mo, pure-white Alaskan racing huskies born in June, and set to join dog-mushing teams working in the Soo and Callaghan Valleys this Christmas.

"The basic ingredients for Pemberton's annual Slow Food Cycle event remain the same as it goes into its third year, with easy biking, farm-gates thrown wide, a natural buffet to sample from, and a promise to engage all the senses," says event founder Lisa Richardson. This backdrop is then infused with the local flavour and character, that make Slow Food Cycle such a unique day out, and have seen it double in size each year since its inception.

This year, Slow Food Cycle sees its first spin-off event, with the Ministry of Agriculture-produced Slow Food Cycle Agassiz taking place August 26.

The Pemberton Centennial Rotary Club will provide a shopping shuttle service for a toonie, so participants keen to load up on local produce, potatoes, artwork, and pottery can pedal unencumbered by their shopping.

For more information, visit www.slowfoodcyclesunday.com. A detailed map of the ride, (prepared and donated by Mt Currie's Land and Resources Department) and a copy of the Slow Food Cycle Almanac will be provided for free to all participating riders at the registration at Pemberton Community Centre on Pemberton Meadows Rd.

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