

SUN MOUNTAIN LODGE

DINING PROGRAM BACKGROUNDER

Including a List of Local Sustainable Growers and Producers

The food at Sun Mountain Lodge is locally inspired, drawing from the rich history of America. During the great western migration, soon to be Methow Valley settlers came through the great Rocky Mountains where they feasted on elk. Moving into the plains they enjoyed the rich abundance of antelope. Moving into our region they added bison and salmon to their diet. Cattle and sheep ranchers moved in to the valley and worked alongside orchardists and organic gardeners.

Today, Sun Mountain Lodge's culinary team stays in touch with the local farmers and food purveyors in the Methow Valley, the Okanogan, and also specialty ranchers whose farming philosophies and practices match the healthy food movement spreading throughout America. The dining menus present the best of local, regional and Western fare as well as a celebrated cellar of fine wines.

Here are some of both the long-standing and newest food suppliers that keep Sun Mountain's dining program expanding the authenticity of its "buy local" commitment.

Crown S. Ranch (Laying hens, chickens, turkeys, pigs, sheep and cattle).

<http://www.crown-s-ranch.com>

Located in Winthrop at the south turn off to Sun Mountain Lodge at the junction of Hwy 20 and Twin Lakes Road, Crown S. Ranch is a family farm the way nature intended. Louis Sukovaty and Jennifer Argraves practice the traditional craft of animal husbandry to raise food in a way that is humane, sustainable, and healthy. Engineers by education, both have a self-reliant, whole systems approach to their farming. Plus Louis can build anything out of recyclables found on the farm! For instance, after their chicks are kept warm and nurtured with grains grown by the farm, they are transferred as adults into big floor-free enclosures propelled over grassland at a caterpillar pace by a home-made solar-powered machine that feeds and waters them, provides them shade, and allows them time to hunt, scratch, and peck at leisure. When it's time, they are harvested right there on the farm. The cattle, pigs, and fowl are raised using time-tested management-intensive grass farming. All their products, including eggs, are organic, free-ranged and as wholesome as food can get.



Big Valley Ranch (Steers)

www.heathbeef.com

Throughout his career as a manufacturing executive, Harold Heath, now 87, dreamed of being a gentleman rancher. He avidly read all there was to read on cattle ranching. In his early '60s, he took the plunge. After consecutive disasters where he lost his investment year after year (not to mention the time he scattered his cattle and it took weeks and a helicopter search to find them) he finally settled on a simple solution. He would rear just 12 to 25 steers a year on land he leased or owned all within a few miles of his Methow Valley homestead. After years of observation, he now pays meticulous attention to detail. He noticed his heifers liked sun-dried grasses better than green grass, so he only mows every other row to give them a balance of both. He adds a specialty mix of grain to their diets (no corn), but shuns unwarranted chemicals, hormones or antibiotics. He allows his steers to mature through their natural growth pattern. The Sun Mountain executive chef personally reviews the cattle and selects the ones he will purchase. After going through the regulation slaughter at a USDA facility in Moses Lake, the beef is aged 40 to 50 days. It is then butchered locally at Thomson's Custom Meats in Twisp. Both Sun Mountain's culinary staff and Chris Thomson perform this function. As resort guests enjoy Harold Heath all natural burgers or steaks at Sun Mountain Lodge from their dining table, they can look out across Harold's house and fields way down in the valley below.



Bluebird Grain Farms

www.bluebirdgrainfarms.com

Since 2005, husband and wife team Sam and Brooke Lucy, launched a plant-to-plate enterprise rarely found in the United States even today. Typically, different companies farm, harvest, husk, mill, and package grains and flours. The Lucy's took their inspiration from European small producers and do it all themselves. Their signature grain, emmer farro is an ancient grain originating in Italy. Organically grown, Bluebird's emmer goes through a signature process that preserves the whole grain, the part that contains important nutrients, including a high level of protein. This can be served like rice or be milled into flour and used in baking bread. Bluebird also produces hot and cold cereals, pancake mix and pilaf. Located on a hillside in the Rendezvous area above downtown Winthrop, Bluebird's three silos stand next to a granary that serves as an office, retail outlet, processing plant, mill and packaging space. Sun Mountain serves Bluebird Farms Emmer Farro "Risotto"—wild mushrooms, truffle oil, tomatoes, parmesan, smoked gouda (vegan upon request) as well as a house-made vegan burger made with the emmer farro.



Undine Acres

<mailto:merwinslileden@aol.com>

When you cross the bridge over the Methow River in Carlton, to the east you'll see a bright pink farm house and the property of Judy Brezina, master gardener and grower of some of the most diverse assortment of organic fruits and vegetables to be found. Heirloom tomatoes passed down through her maternal side are seeded next to varieties from many countries all over the world. Blue currents, purple passion asparagus, Egyptian walking onions, edible flowers and gooseberries are just some of the plantings that run in long rows over several of Undine's acres. Mineral rich soil deposited when the river run though it makes Undine Acres perfect for plants. About 50 percent of what's grown is sold to Sun Mountain Lodge, along with two or three pigs that Judy also raises that are used for the executive chef's charcuterie program.

Blue Star Coffee Roasters

www.bluestarcoffeeroasters.com

Almost two decades of premium specialty coffee roasting experience and extraordinary care in sourcing its coffee are behind every bag of beans or cup brewed at Blue Star Coffee Roasters. The commitment to "whole life" quality and personality of its blends are making owners Dan and Meg Donohue successful at sustaining their enterprise far from the traditional urban coffee crowd. They regard coffee as a culinary art and consider it essential to practice good sourcing. Both Blue Star Coffee's Hwy 20 House Blend and its signature espresso blend have now replaced the big brand coffee that used to be served in the Sun Mountain Lodge dining program. Blue Star's café and roasting facility is located in Twisp just off Hwy 20.



Thomson's Custom Meats

www.thomsonscustommeats.com



Chris Thomson is the go-to butcher in the Methow Valley. His USDA retail shop carries all natural (no antibiotics) locally-grown meats and poultry. In collaboration with Sun Mountain Lodge, Chris has hand-crafted an all-beef frankfurter. This specialty old-fashioned frank is so dense that it is served butterflied for easier eating. Diners may choose between three presentations of the famous frankfurter: German style with house made sauerkraut and stone ground mustard; American style with buffalo chili

and cheddar cheese; and Japanese style with pickled ginger, Japanese mayo, seaweed, bonito flakes, and shaved cabbage.

A separate entrance to Thomson's Custom Meats leads chefs and game hunters into the areas used for custom processing. This is where Sun Mountain Executive Chef Russell Bradshaw not only butchers his steers from Harold Heath, but also teaches butchering skills to the apprentices in the resort's culinary training program sanctioned by the American Culinary Federation and Washington Labor and Industries.

Lost River Winery (John Morgan, Barbara House and Liam Doyle)

www.lostriverwinery.com

Since 2002, this boutique family-owned award-winning winery has continuously produced fine wines such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cedarosa (a blend of Merlot and Cabernet Franc), Community Red, Nebbiolo (an Italian grape), Pinot Gris and Massif (a blend of Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon). The Nebbiolo is a specialty at Sun Mountain Lodge. Lost River wines may be sampled at the winery

located a stone's throw from the main street in downtown Winthrop. The tasting room is open from 11am to 5pm on Friday, Saturday and Monday, year-round.



ADDITIONAL CULINARY SOURCES:

Sunny Pine Farm, Twisp

Ed and Vicky Welch

Organic goat dairy; organic lavender

www.sunnypinefarm.com

Larkhaven Farm, Tonasket (Okanogan Valley)

Farmstead cheeses and meats

www.larkhavenfarm.com

Double R Ranch, Loomis (in the Okanogan)

Raising high quality northwest beef using environmental stewardship practices while caring for the well-being of its herd.

www.doublerranchbeef.com



The Chef's Collaborative

Sun Mountain Lodge is proud to be a member of [Chef's Collaborative](#), a leading nonprofit network of chefs that fosters a sustainable food system through advocacy, education, and collaboration with a broader food community.

For frequent updates on Sun Mountain Lodge's dining offerings, please visit:

www.sunmountaindining.com/notes-from-chef

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