

ART OF GRAFTING

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A close-up photograph of a person's hands, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt, holding a wedge of a yellow melon. The hands are positioned to show the seeds inside the wedge. The background is a light green surface.

SUCCESSFUL SEED SAVING

FOCUS: SEEDS

**ROOFTOP
GREENHOUSE
GROWING
GRAIN GAINS**

Seed to Table

Washington Eatery takes Holistic Approach

by Lauren Turner

Patrons of most restaurants don't realize they are most likely being served up a "healthy" helping of oils processed from genetically modified plants and produce laced with pesticides. Most restaurateurs don't really know what good food is; that it goes beyond good taste. Organic restaurants offer an alternative, but are scarce and often expensive. A new restaurant and learning center in Sequim, Washington, is working to change that.

Sequim is a mecca for the health-conscious, offering a tremendous array of healthy choices. Nourish Greenhouse Restaurant — organic restaurant and community center — at the historic Bell Farm in Sequim, is a new seed to table to good health restaurant.

Principle owners Tanya and Dave Rose, originally from England, and their local partner, Mandy Gaskill, recently opened Nourish.

They are reviving the site of a historical lavender and herb farm for the restaurant. Not intending to diminish the value of the existing and popular organic restaurant that has been in Sequim for years, Nourish provides an additional dining option for the community. Nourish's concept goes beyond serving food, to also serving the community and the environment.

Tanya, Dave, and their principle financial backer, Larry Baugh, have engaged the community from the beginning. They hosted an open house last winter, before opening their doors, inviting people to share their concept for Nourish, and to receive input from them about what they would like to see in the restaurant's offerings. The house was packed with people of all ages who contributed suggestions that Nourish has worked hard to incorporate into their operation. Early indications are that the community supports Nourish, and Nourish goes the extra mile in supporting the community.

Tanya has been in the United States since finishing college in England in



Nourish, an organic restaurant and community center in Sequim, Washington, takes customers from seed to plate.

1983, living mostly in the Portland, Oregon, area. Dave and Tanya were high school sweethearts for a short time. Thirty-two years later Dave found Tanya's email address through their high school reunion website and contacted her. He visited Tanya in November 2008, and they married last December.

Tanya has always been passionate about healthy food. She says it seems her job in life has been to feed people wholesome, good, hearty, fresh food.

She is concerned that decades of industrial farming and reliance on convenience foods has resulted in a disconnect between people and what was once an intimate relationship with their food. A lot of people no longer realize, or even give a thought to where their food comes from. They are not thinking about how modern production and food transportation practices pollute the environment, affecting air and water quality. Genetically engineered ingredi-

ents have quietly slipped into industrial products applied in the field and into processed foods that dominate grocery store shelves.

Tanya wants to get people back in touch with their food, to help them understand the connection between the quality of their food and the quality of their life. She wants people to understand that "you truly are what you eat."

Gaskill, previously an occupational therapy assistant, had a deep interest in nutrition, and was seeing a life coach to help her find her best next steps in life. She was concerned with the unhealthy lifestyles of people she encountered in her therapy work, many of them senior shut-ins without access to healthy food. She wanted to address their plight and was considering developing individual frozen or fresh healthy meals-to-order for seniors. When Gaskill's life coach learned about Nourish, she saw similarities between her and Tanya's interests,

Customers at Nourish can have confidence in knowing where their meat and produce are from. Food is locally sourced as close to home as possible, staying in Sequim as much as they can . . .

and pointed Gaskill in Tanya's direction. It turned out that Gaskill and Tanya had both independently enrolled in the same online integrative nutrition course, emphasizing health coaching, within two months of each other. An alliance was formed. Gaskill is in charge of event planning and the wellness center at Nourish. Her ideas for the healthy senior meals will eventually be worked into Nourish's program.

After reuniting, Tanya and Dave traveled together to Ecuador and Belize, spending a year in the remote village of Vinorama East Cape, Baja. There they managed an off-the-grid, solar-powered restaurant.

Tanya visited a friend in Port Angeles, Washington, in November 2012 and was impressed with the food culture on the Olympic Peninsula. She attended a gluten-free retreat in Port Angeles and went to a full-service organic grocery, Nash's Organic Produce, in nearby Sequim. She was surprised that there was a class on GMOs going on in the grocery's education center during their visit. She was impressed with Sequim, and especially Nash's, amazed that the farmer was the hero, the "main man" in town. People interested in a healthy lifestyle seem to flock to Sequim, finding a plethora of the resources they desire.

When Tanya and Dave found the Cedarbrook Farm in Sequim, they knew they were home. Cedarbrook was once an organic lavender and herb farm, one of the oldest in Washington. Cedarbrook was on the Sequim lavender farm tours schedule, an annual event during Sequim's Lavender Festival. More recently,

it housed the Cedarbrook Garden Cafe, so it already had restaurant equipment.

The farm's residence was built in the 1880s by the farm owner, John Bell. It hasn't been occupied since the 1960s and is in need of extensive renovations. It has no indoor plumbing, other than some cold running water. Dave is a carpenter, and is renovating the restaurant and the house. The farm's owners support Tanya and Dave's concept for Nourish and are leasing the property to them, with an option to buy. Tanya and Dave are investing their time and resources in the property, hoping to make it their permanent home.

The land with the house is 1.3 acres. The restaurant and garden occupy another 1.6 acres. The restaurant's upstairs provides space for classes and for private dining and meetings.

While the dining experience is foremost, being a community resource for education about healthy living as well as a place people come for relaxation and entertainment are vital components of Nourish's business. They host local guest speakers on health topics, offer classes on healthy eating and will soon offer cooking classes.

The partners are committed to being a showcase for local products and serve as an outlet for local artists and musicians. In more ways than one, every dollar made at Nourish goes right back into the community. Every other month they host a reception, providing wine tasting and hors d'oeuvres, that features a selected local artist. They offer enter-

tainment by local musicians, poets, and acting troupes, including an open mic night each week.

On-site gardens have paths integrated for patrons to wander through and strategically arranged seating areas for enjoying the garden environment. There are raised vegetable beds for people to walk around and view, along with being able to tour the herb gardens. The gardens cleverly display the seed-to-plate concept, as customers dine on dishes made from the produce they just viewed.

Nourish has replanted herbs and will supplement old perennial herbs that are still there, planting a wider array of culinary herbs to be used in the restaurant. They also plan to propagate and sell the herbs. Vegetables from the garden are used in the kitchen.

Tanya and Dave plan to plant cover crops, recommended by Nash's farm, to supply more nitrogen to the soil. Once an appropriate site is developed for composting, kitchen waste will be composted, and the compost used to enrich the garden soils, completing the circle of seed to plate, and ultimately back to seed.

Tanya says she loves working with farmers, figuring out how farmers and restaurants can work together and how raising animals connects with the restaurant. It is a powerful way to demonstrate the farm-to-plate food chain.

Gaskill and Tanya have committed a year to the integrative nutrition online course mentioned above. It supports their belief that food comes into balance



Nourish brings the gardens indoors.

when other life aspects are in balance. Health coaching is a good fit with the restaurant, learning what works for you and your body. Tanya believes there is no one right diet for every person, but that eating whole, clean, organic food including lots of greens is an essential part of everyone's diet.

Nourish provides a menu suitable to most people's diets, paying careful attention to special dietary needs. Most should be able to come in and eat, with no worries about where the food comes from. Tanya likens it to an organic grocery where you don't need to read labels because you trust it's been done for you. Customers at Nourish can have confidence in knowing where their meat and produce are from. Food is locally sourced as close to home as possible, staying in Sequim as much as they can, within the Olympic Peninsula next, then expanding to within Washington and a small amount from Oregon. They patronize producers and wild food foragers who share their philosophy.

Within Sequim alone is an adequate number of farmers, both certified organic or committed to organic principles, who produce pastured beef, pork, lamb, poultry and eggs. Fresh, wild seafood is also readily available in Sequim. More such products are available on the Olympic Peninsula, within a 25-mile radius of Sequim.



Nourish Cafe adjacent to the Greenhouse Restaurant.



Nourish sits amidst its gardens in Sequim, Washington.

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Nourish is selective of oils, flours and sweeteners and they use only non-GMO products. Canola, corn and soy oils are a primary source of GMOs and are widely used in the food industry, since they are relatively cheap. Nourish minimizes the use of oils, and uses only quality, non-GMO oils, including lard, coconut oil, pastured butter, some sesame oil for flavor, and cooking and salad grade olive oils. All of their baked products are gluten-free, relying on alternative flours. Sweeteners are minimized, relying on the sweetness inherent in fruits and some vegetables. Organic cane sugar and raw honey are used when more sweetness is wanted. All food is prepared fresh.

Organic restaurants can be expensive, and while they believe that investing in how you eat is important, Nourish strives to keep their prices reasonable. It is challenging, since organic restaurants still are a niche market, and Tanya says that the major grocery distributors have nothing for her. Consequently, it is more expensive to purchase organic ingredients from smaller distributors. They are experimenting with having a fixed menu, offering different dishes at different times, according to season.

Nourish wants to offer new flavors that people may not have tried before. Weekly, they receive a box of produce from Nash's Farm Store, and host farm share box, or "What's in the Box?" night, using a box of seasonal produce that varies according to what was harvested on the farm that week, to introduce patrons to new ways of cooking vegetables. Nourish also provides recipes for the customers to take home.

Nourish demonstrates good stewardship of the environment through their practices. The operation is committed to sustainability. Local food purchasing cuts down on transportation costs, besides boosting the freshness of the food served. They reduce waste by maintaining a focused menu with healthy portions. Until they begin composting, kitchen waste is picked up by a local woman who feeds it to her chickens. Compost will eventually be used to maintain rich soil in the kitchen gardens. They maximize recycling, repurpose materials, and use planet-friendly cleaning products. They use real linens and dishes; nothing disposable. They use energy-efficient lighting and are mindful of energy and water consumption.



In a pinch, Tanya Rose doubles as chef.

The motif is a simple country style, featuring the Greenhouse Restaurant, adorned with herbs along the windows and in planters. The facility is rustic and warm, with pallet wood furnishings and planters crafted by Dave.

The Nourish Patio Cafe is a casual walk-up in a room adjacent to the Greenhouse Restaurant offering healthy baked goods and a variety of locally roasted coffees and drinks. A local coffee roaster has also helped Nourish develop a coffee blend, which they sell under their own label. Their sodas are made in their kitchen, using a dash of local honey as a sweetener. Beer and wine from local wineries, cideries, and breweries are also available in the café. Space in the cafe is devoted to showcasing locally produced food and drink products, and the work of local artists.

Tanya and Dave have modeled the concept for Nourish partly on Jamie Oliver's Restaurant 15 in England, which combines the restaurant business with a culinary education program for under-privileged youth. Other similar influences are the Herb Farm restaurant in Woodinville, Washington, near Seattle (www.theherbfarm.com), and Flora Farms in Baja, Mexico (www.flora-farms.com).

Nourish provides on-the-job training at the restaurant, teaching a garden-to-kitchen-to-restaurant concept, with an underpinning of nutritional knowledge. Like Restaurant 15, Nourish's long-term vision includes offering apprenticeships in a culinary school, free of tuition. The Roses hope to eventually work with the culinary program in the skills center at Peninsula College in Port Angeles. Nourish may be able to provide culinary

experience to the Peninsula College students.

Nourish is growing its program gradually. They have taken on one intern, whose first assignment was to find organic farmers in the community, understand what's available locally and seasonally and develop recipes. The intern is paid to work while getting on-the-job training, which includes work in the restaurant and in events catering. She does dishwashing and prep in the pantry, and is learning basic sauces. She also has enrolled in the culinary program at the community college in Port Angeles. Tanya and Dave are taking "baby steps" for now, hoping to steadily grow their program. They have about 15 employees, including a head chef and catering manager. Employees are learning the basics of restaurant work and are encouraged to pursue other related interests.

The program will create chefs with a different orientation, having the potential to make a substantial difference in the restaurant industry. Future restaurateurs leaving Nourish will be carrying this knowledge and these practices forward into the world. This is no small achievement, testing the wisdom of conventional knowledge about food.

For more information on Nourish visit www.nourishsequim.com or call 360-797-1480.

Lauren Turner is a freelance writer, specializing in agricultural, environmental and community topics. She retired from a 30-year career with the U.S. Forest Service, where she worked as a wildlife biologist, ecosystem manager and district ranger. An avid organic gardener, she lives in Sequim, Washington, with her husband and their cat.