



Contact: Shaun Wiley
847-644-0237
swiley@wordwiley.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CULINARY ESCAPES FEEDS DETROIT'S CULINARY TOURISM SCENE
Guided Walking Food Tours a Must-Do For Foodies Across The Country

DETROIT – (March 10, 2010) – These days, it seems everyone is having a love affair with food. With scores of cookbooks, cooking shows and Web sites dedicated to the art of eating, food has come out of the kitchen and into the mainstream like never before.

Nowhere is that love of all things food more evident than in the rise of culinary tourism. Culinary tourism, as defined by the International Culinary Tourism Association, is “the pursuit of unique and memorable culinary experiences of all kinds, often while traveling.” According to a 2006 survey by the Travel Industry Association (TIA), of the 160 million U.S. residents who travel for leisure, about one in six had recently taken a food tour, enrolled in a cooking class, toured a winery or otherwise participated in culinary activities as part of a vacation.

Since 2008, Culinary Escapes has catered to Michigan’s culinary adventurers with walking food tours of Detroit suburbs Royal Oak and Birmingham and downtown Detroit eateries. Culinary Escapes was the first company in Southeastern Michigan to offer walking food tours, a trend already prevalent in Chicago, New York and Seattle. Food tours are designed to give participants an insiders’ view of an eatery’s or chef’s personal food philosophy, learn the origins of popular dishes and of course, sample tasty cuisine. Additionally, Culinary Escapes has focused on exposing participant’s palettes to a wide variety of regional Michigan delights, including a stop at one of the state’s oldest Farmer’s Markets, custom wineries and the grilled cheese sandwich Oprah Winfrey dubbed “the greatest.”

While the TIA study ranked Michigan as one of the top 15 destinations for food related travel, according to Ann Wilson, founder and owner of Culinary Escapes, Michigan food remains an undiscovered gem.

“Many people are not aware of the amazing foods indigenous to our state,” said Wilson. “From our cider mills to our Coney dogs, the food of Michigan is steeped in rich traditions and stays with you long after the last bite. With our Culinary Escapes tours, we aim to shine a spotlight on the eateries that prepare the dishes featuring these local ingredients, as well as expose people to new experiences through food.”

Highlighting Michigan Cuisine has become a statewide mission; the Michigan Culinary Tourism Alliance was recently formed in partnership with the Michigan Department of Agriculture, Michigan Restaurant Association and Travel Michigan. The Alliance plans to promote Michigan as a destination for culinary travel, increase restaurant menu offerings of local products and increase profitability for Michigan specialty crop producers.

According to Renee Monforton of the Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau, Michigan has much to offer foodies.

“We want to show both residents and the culinary traveler what makes Michigan special and we believe one of our greatest assets is our food,” said Monforton. “Culinary Escapes has done a terrific job of flaunting those assets.”

Culinary Escapes’ Royal Oak and Birmingham tours begin April 10; the Downtown Detroit tour begins June 12. For ticket prices, participating eateries and other tour information, visit the Culinary Escapes Web site at www.culinary-escapes.com

About Culinary Escapes

Culinary Escapes was the first company to provide guided walking food tours in Southeastern Michigan. The company was born out of founder Ann Wilson’s passion for food and the desire to showcase the abundance of culturally diverse eateries of the state. For more information about the company, or to schedule a tour, please visit www.culinary-escapes.com