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**NEXT STOP – A TASTY ADVENTURE**

*Culinary Escapes highlights cultural cuisines through guided food tours*

**ROYAL OAK, Mich.** – (August 7, 2008) – Luscious handmade chocolate truffles; premium Chinese teas; zesty Tex-Mex and a barbecue joint where finger-lickin' good ribs are in generous supply. While it may be hard to swallow that you could eat your way through all these delicious delights in one afternoon, new company Culinary Escapes offers a passport to the finest cultural cuisine in Royal Oak, Mich. through its guided walking food tours.

Residents and tourists alike are invited to experience the rich history of downtown Royal Oak by immersing themselves in a unique tasting tour that features stops at some of the most distinctive new and established restaurants in the area. Tour participants interact with owners and food experts in a fun and relaxed atmosphere while sampling a variety of delicious cuisines.

The three and a half hour walking tour meets every other Saturday at the Royal Oak Farmers Market, a city institution for more than 80 years. To kick off the day, participants visit with The O'Gradys at the Farmers Market to get a peek into how to make peanut butter. The tour continues on with stops at eight eateries, including:

- **Goldfish Tea**, a contemporary Chinese teahouse which provides tea tips including preparation methods
- A seafood cooking demonstration at **Superior Fish Company**, a family-owned establishment where fresh fish is flown in daily
- Barbecue on the top deck of the famed **Memphis Smoke**, a favorite of locals and visitors
- The aromatic **Gayle's Chocolates**, the renowned shop that offers chocolate for every mood and occasion

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- **Zumba Mexican Grille**, where Tex-Mex gets a healthy twist including a salsa-bar featuring five homemade salsas
- An inside look at **Holiday Market**, a specialty foods grocer that imports fine wine, meats and cheeses from around the world
- **Pizza Paesano**, which offers a tantalizing mix of pizzas topped with the traditional, like pepperoni and the trendy such as gyros, baked potatoes and black beans
- With sweet treats that remind you of home, the last stop on the tour is **Hermann's Bakery**, which has been a destination for Detroitians for over 50 years.

According to Ann Wilson, founder of Culinary Escapes, the Royal Oak Tasting Tour is an experience that brings delicious cuisine to life.

“This is a unique opportunity for personal interaction – you can learn the history of the restaurants, hear the personal stories of the owners and discover their individual culinary philosophies,” said Wilson. “Eating and the art of cooking becomes an adventure. People walk away from the tour inspired by the experience and excited to continue exploring new tastes and techniques.”

Janice Girling, co-owner of Goldfish Tea agrees.

“It is always fun to introduce people to foods and beverages they might not normally try,” said Girling. “The tasting tour allows you to welcome people into your restaurant and give them a culinary education in an interesting way.”

Culinary Escapes' Royal Oak Tasting Tour meets at 11 a.m. every other Saturday from April through September, rain or shine at the Royal Oak Farmers Market. Participants should arrive 15 minutes early and the tour lasts approximately three and a half hours. Tickets are \$35 and must be purchased in advance. The tours are limited to 16 people and comfortable clothing and shoes are recommended due to extensive walking. Private tours are available year-round and can be customized according to the group. Gift certificates are also available.

### **About Culinary Escapes**

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Founded in 2008, Culinary Escapes was born out of founder Ann Wilson's passion for food and the desire to showcase the abundance of culturally diverse eateries of Southeast Michigan.

Future guided walking food tours will include Ann Arbor, Eastern Market, downtown Detroit, Dearborn and Ferndale. For more information about the company, or to schedule a tour, please visit [www.culinary-escapes.com](http://www.culinary-escapes.com)

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