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*The First Ever Guided Food Tours in
Southeastern Michigan Returns With New Courses, Eateries*

March 2, 2009) – Culinary Escapes, the first company to offer a passport to the finest cultural cuisine in Southeastern Michigan through its guided walking food tours, is back for a new season of tasty treats and expanded tours.

Starting April 4, residents and tourists alike can 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. As an added treat for the 2009 season, Culinary Escapes will offer a “Multicultural Delights” tour of Ferndale, Mich. and a “Hidden Gems” tour of Birmingham, Mich.

The original Royal Oak Walking Tour is a three and a half hour walking tour that meets every other Saturday at the Royal Oak Farmers Market and begins with a demonstration on how to make peanut butter. The tour continues on with stops at eight eateries, including:

- New in 2009, **Royal Oak Brewery** will serve up spicy Louisiana Jambalaya and one of its six to seven fresh beers that are on tap daily to wash it down.
- **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
- **Zumba Mexican Grille**, where Tex-Mex gets a healthy twist including a salsa-bar featuring five homemade salsas
- **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 Michiganders for over 50 years.

Starting in July 2009, Culinary Escapes will focus on the gastronomic delights of nearby Ferndale and Birmingham. The Birmingham "Hidden Gems" tour is a progressive multiple course lunch, with each course hosted by a different restaurant including Brooklyn Pizza, which uses all natural ingredients and a wood-fired pizza oven and Canella Patisserie which serves up authentic French pastries. The "Multicultural Delights" tour of Ferndale will shine a spotlight on the ethnic fare of this bustling suburb including Anita's Kitchen, a Lebanese Café and The Emory, a cozy gathering place that incorporates ingredients from local sources. Similar to the Royal Oak tour, these will also be walking tours.

According to Ann Wilson, founder and owner of Culinary Escapes, the success of the Royal Oak Tour during its first season inspired her to add more tours to the mix.

"We were overwhelmed by the positive response to the Royal Oak Tour," said Wilson. "It really demonstrated the desire for something unique and fun in the metro Detroit area. It made sense to highlight the cuisines of other areas and we want to encourage people to discover the fantastic food these communities have to offer."

Culinary Escapes' Royal Oak Tasting Tour meets at 11 a.m. every other Saturday from April 4 through October, 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. Gift certificates are also available. The Ferndale and Birmingham Tours will begin July 18 and run through October.

About Culinary Escapes

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. For more information about the company, or to schedule a tour, please visit www.culinary-escapes.com

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