

NEWS RELEASE

NEW CALIFORNIA GUIDE HELPS TRAVELERS STAY HEALTHY ON THE ROAD

California Healthy Meets Fresh Food and Fitness Trends with Smart Travel Alternatives

PACIFIC GROVE, Calif., January 1, 2007—As growing numbers of consumers opt for organic food and healthier lifestyles, a new California travel guide is mapping the way. *California Healthy* champions the art of healthy living on the road, taking the reader off the beaten path and toward the places and events that highlight wholesome food and fitness in the Golden State.

The first edition of *California Healthy* focuses on Southern California, covering San Luis Obispo to San Diego counties. Each county chapter features detailed listings of health-oriented restaurants, cafés, and whole food markets (including vegetarian and vegan options); organic farms and wineries; parks, beaches, town centers and walking trails; and natural food, art and cultural festivals. Convenient maps and directions show readers how to reach each place from the freeway and major roads.

Consumers Seek Out Healthy Choices in a Fast-Food World

A number of recent trends and studies point to the desire for consumers to eat healthier, and the difficulty of doing so in today's fast-food culture. For example:

- In recent years, sales of organic foods have risen about 20 percent.
- A survey published late last year found that three out of four food shoppers believe what they eat at home is healthier than meals they eat out.
- Other studies estimate that consumption of food eaten away from home has increased at least 14 percent over the past three decades.
- Eating food away from home, especially fast food, is often seen as contributing to obesity and other nutritional problems.

California Healthy author Patricia Hamilton says her goal is to provide health-conscious consumers with as many options on the road as they would have in their home environments, with thousands of listings for whole food restaurants, cafés, markets, and fresh food events. Listings and maps throughout *California Healthy* lead readers directly to those healthier natural alternatives.

Hamilton, a California native who has authored three other travel books and numerous articles, adds that her idea for the guide evolved from her own difficulties finding healthy places to stop, eat and take a simple stroll while on the road.

“When you're traveling along the highway, it's hard to know where to turn off to find a restaurant with good, wholesome food, or just a nice park or walking trail where you can stretch your legs,” says Hamilton. “Health-conscious travelers don't want to end up at a fast-food restaurant searching for the least damaging alternative. I thought it would be wonderful to have a guide that specifically highlighted the healthy places in each town, and included directions right from the highway or major roads.”

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Far more than a travel guide, California Healthy also includes a complete collection of whole food recipes created by Stanford University executive chef Bruce Biron. Biron specifically selects a range of delectable dishes that celebrate California's diverse natural flavors and rich cultural heritage. He also encourages the use of organic and Super Food ingredients wherever possible.

"The collection embraces fresh, organic foods that move directly from the farm to our tables," says Biron. "That's the way it used to be, and I believe it's time to return to our roots."

To round out its health-oriented approach to travel, the guide also features walking tips from Janel Willette, a certified exercise physiologist who specializes in personal training, athletic coaching, nutrition counseling and personal wellness. Willette's approach to fitness draws on many Eastern traditions, integrating the energy of mind, body and spirit to find the perfect balance within each individual.

Supporting "Slow Food" and Sustainable Farming

Hamilton's motives for developing the guide stretch beyond her desire to direct travelers to healthy alternatives on the road. An ardent supporter of sustainable farming and other means of protecting the planet, she hopes to guide people toward places where they can meet the farmers and culinary artists who support Earth-friendly methods of producing their wholesome and flavorful food. Hamilton, who often takes her young grandchildren on her road trips, believes it's important to educate them, and her readers, on where their food comes from.

"Now, when we go to the farmers markets in different places, the kids will go right up to the farmers and talk to them about how the food is grown. They need that information if they're going to eat healthy, and one day help protect the sources of that good food," she says.

Hamilton is also a member of the Slow Food Movement. Originating in Italy, the movement advocates leisurely community meals that use seasonal and local foods, and supports community food producers committed to sustainability and biodiversity.

"The movement offers a way of truly savoring your dining experiences, while recognizing the value of good, fresh food and the influence of local cultures and traditions on its preparation," she explains. "We need to slow down in all areas of our lives, but especially when it comes to food."

More information on Slow Food is available at www.slowfoodusa.org.

About Patricia Hamilton

A fifth generation California native, Patricia Hamilton travels the Golden State in search of the best and healthiest food, drink and walking places within its borders. She often takes her young grandchildren, Zack and Grace, on her journeys, hoping to open their eyes to the many natural wonders awaiting their discovery. A seasoned traveler and accomplished writer, Patricia has authored three Monterey County Guide books and numerous travel articles for the Monterey Convention and Visitor's Bureau and other publications. Contact her at CaliforniaHealthy@sbcglobal.net.

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