

Read. Travel. Eat. Repeat.

Food and travel. They long beat out raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens in Chelle's private rendition of "My Favorite Things."

During a recent interview for an article reviewing my guidebooks, the writer asked me, "If you had your choice, would you rather write about food and restaurants or travel?" My answer: They're interrelated. I can't write about travel without writing about food because how and what people eat is so much a part of their culture and geography. I would say food writing is a subset of my travel writing.

I love reading about food and travel almost as much as writing about it, so when November rolls around and I see the fruits of *Times of the Islands'* Cuisine & Travel Issue, I'm near ecstatic. This has to be our tastiest issue to date.

Read with me, and sip pinot noir in California's Mendocino County, check into a charming Maine B&B, fish for king salmon in British Columbia's Queen Charlotte Islands, bite into a juicy Florida field-grown tomato in Palmetto, rid yourself of the notion that British dining is boring on a virtual trip to London, experience time warp in Florida's Mexico Beach, peer into the Grand Canyon, and taste the 100 best dishes of Lee County. All without a passport, a baggy holding three-ounce bottles, a fork, or a gas pump. All right here in the pages of *Times of the Islands*.

I inherited my love of food and travel from my parents. My father, Gene, was a truck driver who thought nothing of jumping behind the wheel of our old 1956 Ford Customline and hauling my mother and us four kids across the country on his week off. A love for the road: he had it in his DNA, and I definitely got that gene from Gene.

My mother, Theresa, like any good



German *hausfrau*, fed us all too well on apple pies, fresh raspberry jam, strawberry shortcake, corn on the cob, home-made sauerkraut, pork roast, beef Stroganoff, and an endless menu of specialties using the bounty from our way-too-big (when it came to weeding) garden and my grandparents' farm. So there's no need telling you from where my appetite for dining surfaced. And not just any old food, mind you, she has successfully spoiled me for anything not made from scratch.

So when I'm in a car or on a plane that's headed toward a chef who knows his way around a fresh market, I'm smiling. When I can't be traveling or dining, I'm reading about it. And then I don't feel so bad.

With sincere appreciation,

Chelle Koster Walton
Cuisine & Travel Editor,
Times of the Islands

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