



A New Home for Real Food

Mercury in retrograde? What is that? Is it about the stars all lining up, the planets in the same plane? Is it synchronicity or serendipity?

I heard from three individuals within two days about a new place that was going to be called Real Food and it was going to be in Porter Creek somewhere. All very nebulous and ringing bells in my mind. Someone was using the name of my column after two years of careful cultivation.

Just before the New Year, I found the location of the Real Food Market and took time for an unannounced visit.

As soon as I walked in, it was like a breath of new life. All I could do was smile. It was the smell of recognizable fresh baking, the deep heady aroma of strong coffee bean and the sweet aftertaste of dark chocolate.

Then I saw Jonathon Peterson and Matthias Lexow smiling from behind the counter.

We've known each other from previous exploits on the corner of First and Main so, with a quick casual introduction and handshake, it was like coming home after a trip where we'd forgotten to say goodbye.

I dived right into all the questions about why this location, what're they going to market, where have they been and what are their plans. Peterson looked at me and simply asked if I needed a coffee, then told me to have a seat.

The latté was huge, hot and perfect.

The new building they're housed in is small by restaurant standards but it fits their needs more than adequately. Subtle dark tones, rich wood accents, chairs that beg to be nestled in and a Grand Victoria piano from over The Pass that has as much history as anything in Whitehorse.

It fills the warm space, inviting subdued conversations and rekindled friendships. There's room for a few people but it's about visiting and making room for the next friend at the counter.

The location is based on traffic flow, neighbourhood stability, community and friendships that were created downtown and brought to Porter Creek.

The design is based on recent travels through Europe to the most out-of-the-way cafés and food shops they could find.

The bakery portion is based on original and new recipes with only certified organic ingredients as demanded by Lexow. The tempting food from the kitchen is arriving via Peterson now that the kitchen is complete.

I had to ask about the addition of "Market" to the name. Peterson and Lexow are looking to not only provide the fare they are so well known for, they are also looking to market local food. I instantly invited them to the next organic growers meeting to tell their story.

It means cultivating relationships with local growers to provide the freshest local food possible in season. It means setting up an actual market in the summer on the soon-to-be-constructed deck around the building for vendors to market freshly grown food.

I spent hours listening and being educated to their motivation and their hopes to bring a new and greater level of awareness to their friends and customers on what real food is all about. It's about much more than just food.

I asked about the menu and Peterson just smiled and said it is going to be great.

Pay the Real Food Market a visit and talk with Peterson and Lexow about their old passions and new visions.

I can't wait to return for some real food and to bring them some local organic produce.

Oh, and by the way, they're on Centennial Street beside the highway in Porter Creek.

Talk to me about real food.

Tom Rudge farms with his wife, Simone, and children, Claire and Graham, at Aurora Mountain Farm, one of several certified organic farms in the Yukon.