



Vermont Fresh Network Newsletter

Spring 2001

Volume 3, No. 2

Raspberry Cream Tart

From Deborah Madison's
Saturday Market,
Sunday Lunch

Serves 8

Inspired by the plump pink, red, and gold raspberries in the Londonderry, Vermont market, this tart is simple but fragrant. The "crust" is really more like a cake – soft and buttery with just a little crispness at the edges. When made with Vermont's exceptional butter and cream as well as these luscious berries, this is one of the best desserts imaginable.

½ cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
½ cup plus 1 teaspoon sugar
Pinch of salt
1 teaspoon vanilla, divided
3 eggs at room temperature
7/8 cup flour
¾ cup creme fraiche from Vermont Butter & Cheese Company
2 heaping cups raspberries
Powdered sugar

Preheat the oven to 375° F. Lightly butter an 11-inch tart pan.

1. Cream the butter with the sugar and salt until smooth and supple. Scrape down the sides of the bowl, then add

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VERMONT FRESH FORUM: CREATING A GREEN BOTTOM LINE

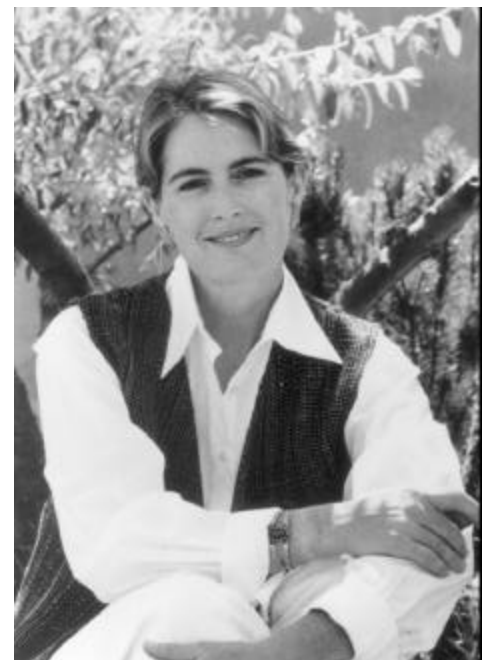
June 18, 2001 at
Shelburne Farms

You're invited to the **Vermont Fresh Network Forum**, *Creating a Green Bottom Line*, at the Coach Barn, Shelburne Farms on **June 18, 2001 from 2 – 8 PM.**

The afternoon events, designed especially for farmers and chefs, begin with an address by **Deborah Madison**, founding chef of Greens Restaurant in San Francisco and Cafe Escalera in Santa Fe. She authored seven books including *The Greens Cookbook*, *The Savory Way*, *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*, and most recently, *This Can't be Tofu!* *The Savory Way* and *Vegetarian Cooking For Everyone* were awarded the Julia Child Cookbook of the Year and a James Beard award. Her latest book is entitled *Saturday Market, Sunday Lunch*. She'll talk about her philosophy of food and describe the challenges and experiences of buying local products.

Next, we plan a group of special **farmer/chef programs** that focus on the cornerstones of cost, convenience, quality and consistency, and marketing to consumers.

A **silent auction** of foods, restaurant coupons, artwork, and other Vermont products highlights a reception that precedes dinner. Dinner, catered by the New England Culinary Institute, features a **cornucopia of local foods**. We'll also present the



Deborah Madison

first VFN partners' award to an outstanding farmer/chef team that exemplifies the Network's mission and goals. After dinner, Deborah will speak about the **consumers' role in sustainable agriculture**.

We gratefully acknowledge the sponsorship of Cabot Creamery, Chittenden Bank, Shelburne Farms, Vermont Department of Agriculture, and Vermont Cheese Council to this year's Forum.

We invite all VFN **farmers and chef partners, members, and the general public** to join us. While designing the afternoon program for farmers and chefs, we welcome everyone to attend. See registration form on page 3 for fees and other details.

A Commitment to Something Greater . . .

I attended a recent board meeting of the Vermont Fresh Network, where we discussed the merits of optional vs. mandatory dues and how to recruit more farmers and food producers into the Network. A question arose about what exactly are the benefits of being a “Partner.” As a chef/owner, the benefits to restaurants are obvious – access to excellent local products, consumer support, and market appeal. But, what is the benefit to farmers or producers who can sell their products whether or not they are an official partner?

To me the value of the **chef-farmer Partnership** is much deeper and less visible to the eye than the many good, practical reasons stated by the Network. My involvement in the Vermont Fresh Network, having formal partnerships with farmers or producers, means a commitment to something much greater.

It is a commitment to Vermont, to preserve the natural beauty of its farms and open pastures that are in great danger of becoming extinct. We commit to support sustainable agriculture so our children and children’s children may eat food minimally processed, that do not harm their bodies with unknown toxins.

We commit ourselves to support each other’s livelihoods in our own community and not ten states away. It is a commitment from the chef to buy local regardless of the cost because that is the right action. Likewise, a farmer commits back to the chef to supply their products regardless of the demand elsewhere. It is a relationship where both partners take risks! When most of the strawberry crop is wiped out by rain – the chef can count on the farmer to serve them for Father’s Day and the farmer knows the chef will pay the asking price and not buy from California.

Cooking from the Heart at the Round Barn Farm owes much of its success to a farmer who puts his heart and soul into the food he grows. We are so proud to offer local organic vegetables from Dave Hartshorn of Hartshorn Farms in Waitsfield. From sunrise to sunset (sometimes earlier and later), Dave works harder than any person I know. Seven days a week, rain or shine, he and his helpers are out in the fields.

He grows strawberries, baby greens, vegetables, tomatoes, herbs, potatoes, flowers, and the sweetest corn around. In the fall, Hartshorn farm, known for its Pumpkin Patch and Enchanted Forest, attracts people from all over Vermont. Each year he adds something new; this year it’s artichokes. In greenhouses, he grows some of the most delicious salad greens I’ve ever tasted. And they’re available throughout the winter, no matter how high the snow. What a blessing this year!

Dave delivers vegetables right to the kitchen doorstep; knowing he is only three miles down the road is a blessing. Over the years, our relationship grew from farmer and chef to friendship – we run into each other socially and most important support the other in difficult times, like the Flood of ’99. And we celebrate together at the end of the season.

Another special friendship we share is with Judy and Jim MacIsaac of Highland Sugarworks in Websterville. They provide all the maple syrup for the Inn, Round Barn Foods, and Cooking from the Heart. Two years ago we collaborated to produce a line of tropical fruit maple syrups – mango, guava, and passionfruit. Judy, a former Network board member, was instrumental in helping us launch Round Barn Foods. Her generosity and commitment exemplify the heart of the Fresh Network and what is possible when people work together.

We also feature Vermont cheeses at our events. We use wonderful cheese from Shelburne Farms, Lazy Lady Farm, Willow Hill Farm, Green Mountain Blue, and Vermont Butter and Cheese Company.

At year’s end, we celebrate with a big party for all the staff and invite the farmers, suppliers, and vendors to share our success and our mutual bounty. What wonderful rewards to support and be supported by a network of people who care about the food they grow, produce, prepare, and serve – knowing we are all better for it.

Annee Hayden Rhoades, Owner
Cooking from the Heart

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Raspberry Cream Tart

1/2 teaspoon vanilla and two of the eggs plus the whites of the third egg. Beat until smooth. With the speed on low, add the flour and mix just until combined.

2. Scrape the batter into the tart pan. Using an offset spatula, smooth the batter over the pan, then push up enough batter to make a slightly higher rim around the edge. Even a quarter-inch rise will be sufficient. Don't worry about getting it absolutely even.
3. Mix the egg yolk with the creme fraiche and remaining vanilla. Pour this over the batter and spread it just to the raised edge.
4. Place the berries on the custard. Two ups will be enough to make a fairly close covering. You can do this randomly or start by placing the largest berries, around the outer edge of the tart, then using smaller and smaller berries as you work your way in. Leftovers can be tucked into any gaps. Sprinkle the remaining sugar over the fruit. Bake in the center oven until the golden brown around the edges and the custard is set, about 40 minutes.
5. Let cool at least 30 minutes before serving. Dust with powdered sugar and serve barely warm.

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Freckles Meets Merlot in Londonderry, Vermont

From Deborah Madison's new book, *Saturday Market, Sunday Lunch*

"This weather is unusually cold and windy for July," Ellen Ogden apologized to me as she offered me a jacket. I've noticed that we all do this, claim that the weather of the moment is not at all what it should be. But chilly or not, I was delighted to be visiting Londonderry's little farmers' market with Ellen. The previous night we had eaten well from her garden; today we would see what others were growing.

The market had a familiar assemblage of mid-summer vegetables, with a few stellar standouts, such as three kinds of big plump raspberries. But it was a display of lettuces that was so striking, that I ended up using them in a class I was giving later that day.

Among the salad greens was a deep red loose-leaf lettuce named Merlot, which easily suggested the deep hue of that wine. There was also a selection of green and red-

tipped oak leaf lettuces, a bronze-tinged iceberg, and the charming red-flecked Romaine named Freckles. The leaves of these lettuces grouped themselves effortlessly into a luscious salad of red, purples and greens, and although I could have stopped here, I couldn't help adding some of the market's plum colored opal basil, and flowering red oregano. Some red scallions went in as well, and the resulting salad was utterly alive and vivid both for the eye and the tongue.

There's always something like this happening at the market. Often it's not repeatable, for the following week that stunning speckled lettuce is gone, spotted by an earlier shopper than you, or perhaps the farmer has just run out. But if it's not this combination to be had, quite assuredly another is waiting to be discovered.

Serves 6 or more

1 head red romaine lettuce

- 1 head Freckles lettuce
- 1 head Merlot lettuce
- 10 small Opal basil leaves, plucked and torn
- 1 bunch of red scallions, or a small, red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 1/2 tablespoons aged red wine vinegar
- Salt and pepper
- Johnny-Jump-Ups, red oregano tips, and chopped bronze fennel fronds.

1. Remove the outer leaves of the lettuces, then separate the rest by slicing them at their bases. If small, leave them whole and wash and dry them well. Put them in a spacious bowl with the basil leaves, and the scallions. Toss with a few pinches of salt.
2. Whisk the olive oil, vinegar, and 1/4-teaspoon salt in a bowl, then pour it over the salad. Toss well, add cracked pepper, the flowers and herbs. Toss again, then mound on a large platter. Scatter the scallions, if they've fallen to the bottom, over the top, and serve.

Vermont Fresh Network Forum Registration, June 18th, 2001, Shelburne Farms

Name _____

Address _____

City, Zip _____

Phone _____

Forum Admission fees:	Number Attending:
VFN farmer or chef partners	\$15 _____
VFN members	\$20 _____
General public	\$30 _____
Total	\$ _____

Your check is your reservation

Make Check Payable To: Vermont Fresh Network, 116 State St., Drawer 20, Montpelier, VT 05620
For further information, please call the VFN at 802-229-4706 or 800-658-8787

President's Letter, *Value Added to VFN Membership*

We've created several exciting, new Network programs to add value to VFN Partnerships. To learn how to take advantage of these opportunities to strengthen your farmer/chef partnerships read this newsletter carefully and stay tuned for more information forthcoming in the near future.

Highlighting these new efforts is a "Fresh Sheet" that provides chefs with a weekly listing of available Vermont farm products. Each week, we'll contact participating farmers for product availability. Then the collated information is faxed and emailed to chefs on a specific day of the week. To implement the Fresh Sheet, every VFN farmer will receive a personal call next

month to set up a system that works for you. Chefs will then receive a write-up on the system, which should be operational by June 15th.

We are mounting a major effort to coordinate Network and Partner marketing plans. Personal calls have been made on every chef in the Network to discuss VFN identification, menu support of their farmer partners, a multi-page newspaper insert (circulation of 180,000) with coupon, and cooperative announcement program on VPR. These efforts will build added value into the VFN logo and concept thereby benefiting both farmers and chefs. The annual VFN Dining Guide will be out in early June with a printing of 10,000. All members will receive a supply.

The Department of Agriculture is underwriting the production of Network press kits that will be distributed to newspapers, magazines, and other media across the country.

Our Annual Forum will be held on June 18th at Shelburne Farms providing a face-to-face opportunity for all members to share and learn from each other. Please plan to join us!

The Network is creating a number of new opportunities to add value to your membership, and to your farm or restaurant. Learn how to take advantage of them.

And Happy Spring!

Bill Nixon
President

**Vermont Fresh Network
116 State Street
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Mission: The Vermont Fresh Network builds innovative partnerships among farmers, chefs and consumers to strengthen Vermont's agriculture.