

SAVOUR

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BARRIE'S "AT THE FIVE" GOES LOCAL • TAPPING MAPLE SAP

Pingue Prosciutto

Making Ontario's Own

Over the last decade, the name Pingue has become synonymous with outstanding prosciutto. Mario Pingue transforms naturally raised pork, in some cases Berkshire pork, into elegant slivers of luscious, plum-coloured ham. He is a regular at Niagara culinary events, which are often attended by international luminary chefs. At each of these events, Pingue slices his prosciutto for tasting, and each time, chefs who stop by to taste his prosciutto are astonished that charcuterie this good is actually made in Ontario.

How did it happen? Italian families often make their own prosciutto, and in this case, Pingue's father, known affectionately as Pappa, is an entrepreneur. He bought a building in Niagara's tourist district, intending to turn it into apartments, but he couldn't steer his gaze from the long lines of people waiting to get into two nearby restaurants. My wife is a good cook, he reasoned, so he went into the restaurant business.

The Pingue kids grew up on a farm, ate in season and preserved the harvest. Pappa had worked with Niagara farmers and pasture-raised hogs himself. It made sense to turn the restaurant's cavernous

basement into a cantina for wine and prosciutto.

"I didn't want to get into the charcuterie business," says Pingue, who was on a food and beverage career path partnered with his brother, and using their father's prosciutto. Then came the family's first turn of fate. Michael Olson, then chef of Niagara's *Inn on the Twenty*, tasted the Pingue family prosciutto and said, "We need it on the menu. It's very Niagara."

"Everything we did as a family was Niagara," says Pingue.

"There was no local food movement at the time. It's just what we did." So, Pappa began making 100 hams a year, 50

for his sons and 50 for the inn. That was 15 years ago.

The second turn of fate came when chef/restaurateur Michael Bonacini invited Pingue to bring his prosciutto for a demonstration and tasting. The company's vast brigade of cooks, most of whom had cooked in

top European restaurants, was blown away. They said they hadn't tasted anything this good since they were in Italy or Spain.

The hams are priced at a premium



"Everything we did as a family was Niagara. There was no local food movement at the time. It's just what we did."

for their quality; the animals are pasture-raised, antibiotic- and hormone-free, fed 100 per cent vegetable feed, and cured without nitrates or nitrites. "All we use is sea salt," he declares.

Pingue is a trained chef and sommelier, and studied with an Italian prosciutto master. In the early days, some chefs balked: "How are we going



Pingue prepares prosciutto for slicing. Centre: "Salami Rustica di Pappa."

to make a profit on it?" Easy, says Pingue. He put three slices on a plate and said, "That's a dollar. Add \$1.50 for garnishes. Times three. That's \$7.50. You don't have any appetizers on your menu under \$10." They were sold.

Recently, Pingue expanded his output, using the whole pig—turning bellies into pancetta, pork butt into capicola and jowls into guanciale. They've also added beef and now make bresaola.

This spring, Pingue is going to New York City. Daniel Boulud has asked him for a prosciutto seminar. Ontario prosciutto has hit the big time.

PingueProsciutto.com
CharliePalmer.com
Normans.com
MandalayBay.com
RavineVineyard.com
InnOnTheTwenty.com
OliverBonacini.com
DanielNYC.com



One of Purdy's captains prepares his boat to head out to fish.
Photo: Ministry of Natural Resources, 2007 COA/Jason Mortlock

Family-Fished, Family-Packed Purdy Brings Ontario Lake Fish Home

When chefs get their catch from Purdy Fisheries in Point Edward, just west of Sarnia, Stephanie Purdy packs the boxes herself. The fish are pulled from Lake Huron by her father, two brothers and their crews.

Purdy Fisheries has been a family business for 110 years, and lately the company has sprung up on the radar of Ontario chefs devoted to serving local food. Thanks to an article by Canadian culinary activist Anita Stewart, which leaked the little known fact that Ontario lake fish is netted all year round, Purdy's restaurant customer list is growing.

"Lake fish fit perfectly into the local food movement," says Purdy, who sells the familiar whitefish, yellow perch, pickerel, trout and catfish, but also some lesser-known species: fresh water drum fish works well braised and in chowders; white bass has delicate white meat with a fine flake, well suited to pan-frying; and buffalo fish is beautiful in cakes because it's bony. Some Savour Ontario restaurants cooking Purdy's fish are *Canoe*,

Cowbell, *Reds*, *Langdon Hall* and the *Fairmont Royal York*. On the retail side, *Culinarium* also carries Purdy's fish.

Purdy didn't initially choose the family business for a career, but she went out west to university and came back a foodie. "At the fishery, we deal with food only to a certain level, at the source" she says, "but seeing what chefs come up with is amazing. It's the ultimate validation of what we do."

"I can't be the kind of chef I want to be without the kind of supplier Purdy is."

The fishery's fleet has 10 boats, but there are usually only three fishing boats out on the lake at one time. To get started, two boats go out: one to set the net and the other to set the anchors. The nets stay in the water for four to six weeks, and they're used to fish over and over again. Then the nets are brought back to shore, washed, mended as needed, and the crew and boats are ready for more.

Restaurants get Purdy's fish via courier. The trucks are already on the road, which keeps the fishery from adding to the carbon footprint. Couriers allow her to send even the smallest orders. "We can put the fish on the truck at 6 pm," she says, "and the chef receives it as early as 8:30 the next morning." They're so fresh, in fact, that *Canoe's* Anthony Walsh once complained to her that the fish were still moving when they arrived.

Purdy takes great pride in the best recommendation she ever got. At a culinary event teamed up with Walsh, who cooked a dish with Purdy's fish, he said to the crowd: "I can't be the kind of chef I want to be without the kind of supplier Purdy is." No wonder she plans to add some out-of-the-ordinary fish to his order. "I like to be able to say to him, 'Here's some buffalo fish. Play.'"

PurdyFisheries.com

AnitaStewart.com

OliverBonacini.com/Canoe.aspx

CowbellRestaurant.ca

RedsBistro.com

LangdonHall.ca

Fairmount.com/RoyalYork/

Culinarium.ca



Have Ontario Asparagus Year Round

The Ontario Asparagus Growers' Marketing Board has partnered with innovative distributor 100 Mile Market to bring Ontario asparagus to chefs and retailers year round. The project effectively extends the asparagus season and can bring about an end to the reliance on imports for the majority of the year. The distributor has prepared individually quick-frozen asparagus for both foodservice and retail, with infrastructure, equipment and facilities ready to handle the demand they saw during their launch at the Royal Winter Fair in the fall.

Asparagus.on.ca

100MileMarket.com

Paying Homage to the Source

Barrie's "At The Five" Commits to Local

Forty minutes north of Toronto sits a stylish, culinary beacon devoted to local food. In Barrie, Savour Ontario restaurant *At the Five* was serving good quality Italian food when Anton Volek, barely 30, joined the team. But change was in the air. The chef/manager left, and Anton was offered the job, including a mandate to follow his own vision for the food.

"Basically, last year I was a line cook," he says modestly, when in fact his last position was junior sous chef at *Spencer's at the Waterfront* in Burlington, also a member of Savour Ontario. Still, he decided to step up and walked into the most demanding year of his career. "It was a steep learning curve," he confesses.

Anton was born in Sarajevo and grew up in west Toronto. He studied biochemistry at McMaster, but decided



Above: duck breast with barley risotto. Bottom left: beet salad; right: Anton Volek

Photo Credits: Food: Anton Volek. Portrait: Richard Roth

it wasn't for him. He wanted to cook, and just to be sure he'd like it, he took a cooking job for a few months and was hooked.

His formal training is from Humber College. He has also cooked at *Scaramouche* in Toronto and Gordon Ramsay's *Boxwood Café* in London, England, where he was offered a full-time job that he declined. "The environment was unhealthy," he says. "They work 16 ½-hour days, but the food was pristine, and the brigade and the front of the house were phenomenal."

Anton has earned himself a bit of a following. After a meal of Anton's food, *Cookstown's* owner David Cohlmeier raved about it to Anthony Rose, executive chef of Toronto's *Drake Hotel*, who made a special trip to taste for himself. Anton cooks what he calls "honest food, unadulterated and not doused in sauce, always paying homage to the source."

Simcoe County provides the beef for his carpaccio. An appetizer of red, yellow and candy-cane beets has *Cookstown* to thank for its main ingredient, as well as 14 kinds of lettuces. House-made agnolotti are stuffed with sautéed apples and Berkshire pork from Dingo Farms. Anton buys both whole pigs and lambs from Dingo. He cures the pork loin for a calamari dish, and roasts his "seven-hour lamb leg" to serve with pasta and

onion jam. He stews the braising cuts, makes sausages, and pulls the lamb rib and shank meat for stuffing pasta.

For chicken, Anton is sold on Fenwood Farms: "Their chicken tastes better than the Bresse I tasted in London." River Glen Farm supplies his fresh duck. He serves roasted breast with beets, barley risotto and marmalade jus. The legs are confited for lunch, and the carcass becomes a broth that he uses for a tuna dish.

Anton is thankful for a great brigade. Sous chef Jason Mortell has cooked at *Langdon Hall* and *Peller Estates*; quick-learning apprentice Kevin Krelove has proven invaluable to the team; and a local Barrie legend, D'Arcy McKeever, makes desserts "and keeps me sane, which he says is a full-time job."

AtTheFive.com



Member Restaurants



Greater Toronto Area

Toronto

360 The Restaurant @ The CN Tower
Amuse-Bouche
Canoe Restaurant and Bar
Chez Victor
Clara's Fine Dining at the Claramount
Coca
Cowbell
Crush Wine Bar
Czechoski
Delux
EPIC
Frank/Art Gallery of Ontario
George Restaurant
Globe Bistro
Il Fornello
Jamie Kennedy at the Gardiner
Lucien
Niagara Street Cafe
Pangaea
Reds Bistro
Sequel Restaurant & Catering
Six Steps
Splendido

The Drake Hotel
The Harbord Room
The Old Mill Inn & Spa
The Only on King
Thuet Cuisine – Bite Me! Restaurant
Union
Veritas
Vertical

South Central

Ancaster

Ancaster Old Mill

Burlington

Spencer's at the Waterfront

Font Hill

Wildflower Restaurant

Gore's Landing

The Victoria Inn

Grimsbey

13 Mountain Street

Jordan

Inn on the Twenty

Niagara Falls

AG Restaurant

Boulevard Bistro at Bestwestern Fallsview
The Boulevard Bistro

Niagara-on-the-Lake

Escabèche, Prince of Wales Hotel (Vintage Inns)
Hillebrand Winery Restaurant

LIV

Niagara Culinary Institute

Peller Estates

Restaurant Oban Inn

Restaurant Tony de Luca

Riverbend Inn

Shaw Café and Wine Bar

The Charles Inn

Zee's Patio & Grill

Port Dalhousie

Treadwell – Farm to Table

St. Catharines

Wellington Court Restaurant & Catering

Thorold

Keefer Mansion Inn

Waterford

The Belworth House

North East

Barrie

At the Five Resto+Lounge

Cobourg

The North Side Restaurant

Woodlawn Inn Restaurant

Eagle Lake

Sir Sam's Inn

Fenelon Falls

Eganridge Inn, Country Club & Spa

Gananoque

Gananoque Inn
The Athlone Inn
Trinity House Inn

Huntsville

Eclipse at Deerhurst
The Birches Restaurant, Hidden Valley Resort

Jackson's Point

The Briar's Resort

Keene

Elmhirst's Resort

Kingston

Luke's Gastronomy
Le Chien Noir Bistro

Nobleton

Daniel's of Nobleton

Merrickville

Sam Jakes Inn

Ottawa

Absinthe
ARC Lounge & Restaurant
Courtyard Restaurant
Domus Café
Eighteen Restaurant
Fraser Café

Murray Street

Perspectives

Sweetgrass

The Capital Dining Room

Owen Sound

Rocky Raccoon Café

Peterborough

38 Degrees Restaurant

Pickering

Port on Frenchman's Bay

Port Severn

Severn Lodge

Sudbury

Ristorante Verdicchio

Prince Edward County

Bloomfield

Angeline's Restaurant, Inn & Spa

Bloomfield Carriage House Restaurant

Picton

Amelia's Garden at The Waring House

Clara's Fine Dining at the Claramount

Harvest

Restaurant on the Knoll

The Merrill Inn

Wellington

The Devonshire Inn on the Lake

West

Alton

The Millcroft Inn and Spa

Bayfield

The Little Inn of Bayfield

Cambridge

Langdon Hall Dining Room & Terrace

Elora

Elora Mill Inn

Exeter

Eddington's

Photo: Taste the County



Tapping the Sap

Spring is sweet in Ontario, because maple syrup brings it on. Sugar or rock maple trees need to be 20 to 80 years old. Before tapping can begin, temperatures must rise a few days above freezing. The flow will run two weeks or so, usually between mid-February and early March.

Prince Edward County celebrates maple syrup on March 27-28 with its ninth annual "Maple in the County" festival. Syrup producers and the area's culinary talent join forces to create a gastronomic event for over 5,000 locals and visitors. The festival serves the classics, like pancakes, sausages and hot syrup, frozen syrup candy on a stick, and fudge, but the county goes a step further. Also on the festival's menu: maple truffles, bacon, smoked salmon, elegantly crafted desserts, chocolate bark, popcorn, ice cream and even beer, specifically Sugar Shack Ale from Barley Days Brewery, also available at the LCBO.

OntarioMaple.com

MapleInTheCounty.ca

BarleyDaysBrewery.com

Fergus

The Breadalbane Inn

Goderich

Benmiller Inn & Spa

Guelph

Artisanale

Borealis Bar and Grille

Kincardine

Harbour Street Brasserie

Kitchener

Verses

London

Garlic's

Idlewyld Inn

Morrison

Enver's of Morrison

Paincourt

Stargazers on the Thames

Port Dover

David's Restaurant

Port Stanley

Kettle Creek Inn

M.E. & Suzie's

Southampton

Grosvenor's of Southampton

St. Marys

The Westover Inn

Woolfy's at Wildwood

Stratford

Bijou

Foster's Inn Restaurant

Rundles

Sophisto-Bistro

The Church Restaurant

The Old Prune

Waterloo

Charbries

Hannah's Bella Bistro

Rushes – Waterloo Inn and Conference Centre



SavourOntario.ca



Ontario

The Savour Ontario Dining program was developed in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, and the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation, and is part of the Pick Ontario Freshness initiative. The program is designed to promote fresh, high-quality Ontario foods and to make them the preferred choice of consumers, retailers and restaurants. Contact us at Savour@Ontario.ca

SAVOUR

SPRING ISSUE

Spring is Rich: The articles in this insert reflect Savour Ontario's marketing plan for Spring 2010, focusing on Dairy for March, Greenhouse Vegetables for April and Aquaculture for May.



Photo credit: Rudi Zubler

MARCH

The Upper Class of Creams

Pleasantly Out of the Ordinary

It's a supplier's dream. A chef approaches you for something you've never done before, and it becomes a hot new product.

Harmony Organic Dairy has been producing organic milk and related products for nearly nine years. Then one day David Garcelon, Executive Chef of the Fairmont Royal York Hotel, told Harmony's Director of Marketing Robert Kuenzlen that he wanted a Devonshire-style cream. Could he do it? Luckily the plant manager is British and had made it before, and Crème de la Crème was born.

It is a 48 per cent cream that has a growing number of chefs interested in using it in sweet and savoury applications. "A little goes a long way," says Harmony's president and owner Lawrence Andres, proud that his new local product is less expensive than the original. "The import comes at a hefty price," he adds, "and it's been

ultra-high-temperature treated for a longer shelf life, which affects quality and taste. Crème is fresh and certified organic."

Andres gave some to his friend, Michael Stadlander, chef/owner of *Eigensinn Farm*, who uses it for desserts and to enrich ragouts, and to Brad Long, chef/owner of Toronto's *My Place* and Savour Ontario restaurant *Veritas*. "The first thing I did was put it in my coffee," says Long. His kitchen gave it the usual sweet treatment, but Long found another way to let the product shine. "Mostly, we just leave it alone, as it is," continues Long, "or I salt it and serve it like a cheese on my ploughman's board, to accompany the meat or to spread on a crusty piece of bread."

HarmonyOrganic.ca
Fairmont.com/RoyalYork/
LocalFare.ca

APRIL Greenhouse Goodness

Grown hydroponically, pesticide-free and ripened on the vine, Ontario tomatoes, cucumbers and sweet peppers keep summer alive all year long.

Serve a caprese salad of Ontario buffalo mozzarella from Bella Casara Quality Cheese. For the tomato, take your pick of cocktail, cherry, grape, beefsteak, Roma, cluster or heirloom, and dress with cold-pressed Ontario canola oil.

The "stramato" is a sweet, strawberry-shaped tomato exclusive to Lakeside Produce and comes on the vine. Clip them in small bunches and roast lightly to garnish a steak.

Sauté red, yellow, orange and green peppers to go with sausage and grilled polenta. Stuff "bellbinos," a smaller pepper variety, with quinoa or couscous alongside grilled fish. Finally, cool down a lamb curry with an English cucumber raita served in a hollowed-out mini cucumber, two more products from Ontario's 230 greenhouse growers.

OntarioGreenhouse.com
LakesideProduce.com
Stramato.com



MAY Aquaculture

Farmed Fish: Sustainable and Green

Aquaculture has been traced back 3,500 years to China. By comparison, Ontario fish farming goes back 100 years. For the last 25 years, the industry has used cage culture in the Great Lakes, in the North Channel of Lake Huron, off Manitoulin Island, and in Georgian Bay.

Ontario aquaculture is widely recognized to have a clean environmental record and produces mainly rainbow trout. Caged operations, immersed in a lake's natural habitat, account for 80 per cent of our farmed fish. The industry is heavily regulated and closely scrutinized both by government officials and scientific communities.

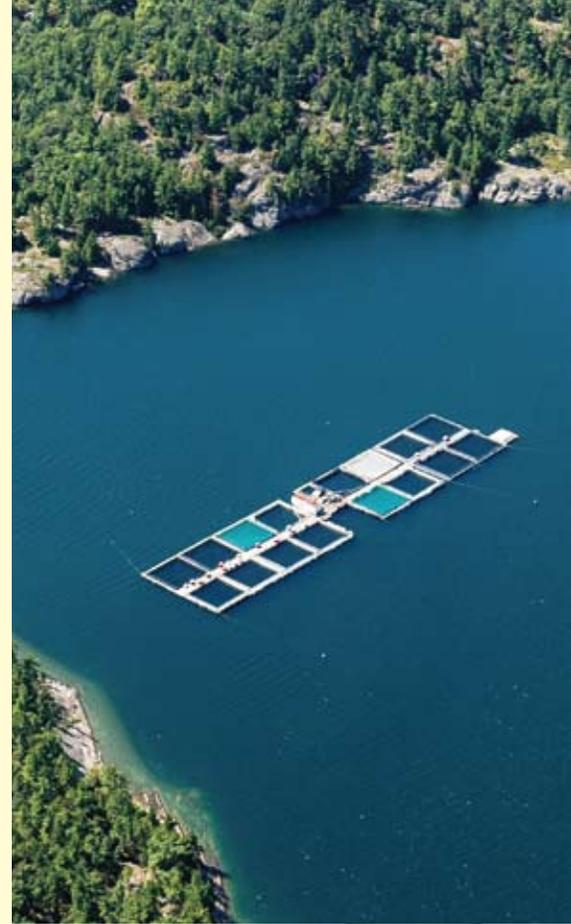
The beautiful colour of farmed rainbow trout comes from naturally

occurring pigments known as carotenoids, which also give salmon and crustaceans their orange-red hues. Carotenoids, which are made by plants and micro-algae, are part of the diet of rainbow trout.

Last August, the Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association released its Strategy for Sustainable Aquaculture Development in Ontario. It calls for maintaining environmental safety and further development of an industry that contributes \$65 million a year to the provincial economy. Sysco, AllSeas and Seacore are just a few of the distributors carrying farmed rainbow trout to fine-dining restaurants and retailers.

OntarioAquaculture.com

Right: A cage operation in the North Channel of Lake Huron, near Little Current. Courtesy of Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association.



What's Available

	Mar	Apr	May
Apples	x	x	x
Asparagus			x
Beets	x	x	
Cabbage	x	x	
Carrots	x	x	x
Cucumber*	x	x	x
Lettuce*	x	x	x
Mushrooms	x	x	x
Onions	x	x	x
Parsnips	x	x	
Peppers*	x	x	x
Potatoes	x		
Radishes			x
Rhubarb	x	x	x
Rutabaga	x	x	x
Spinach			x
Sprouts	x	x	x
Squash	x		
Sweet Potatoes	x	x	x
Tomatoes*	x	x	x

* Greenhouse
Source: Foodland Ontario



Did You Know?

- Tomatoes originated in South America.
- The first variety of tomato introduced to Europe was yellow.
- Considered poisonous for centuries, tomatoes were grown for ornamentation.
- Cucumbers, relatives of the muskmelon, originated in India.
- In the 1930s, "cucumber" was American slang for dollar.
- Greenhouse cucumbers are seedless because they aren't pollinated.
- Sweet peppers originated in Central and South America.
- The red variety has nine times the antioxidants of green peppers.
- All sweet peppers start off green and change colour based on variety.

Sources:
OntarioGreenhouse.com
The Food Encyclopedia, Robert Rose Books



SavourOntario.ca