

# The Farm at South Mountain in Phoenix

By Maralyn D. Hill and Norman Hill

Often, when a destination includes the word “mountain,” we think of a hideaway tucked far and up into the hills, with a steep ascending access road. This is not the case with The Farm at South Mountain, which hosted a lunch and tour we recently attended.

Located a little south of Southern Road and 32nd Street in Phoenix, the Farm packs fascinating variety into its ten acres. It includes three unique restaurants, botanical and succulent nursery markets, massage and yoga facilities, farmers market produce and photographer services.

Across time, there have been four owners: Dwight Heard (of the Heard Museum), Skeeter Coverdale, Wayne Smith and, most recently, Pat Christofolo. Whereas Wayne Smith started envisioning The Farm and opening a couple of the restaurants, Christofolo had the vision of its current status and reputation. As owner of Santa Barbara Catering, she could see the potential and keeps working at enhancing it in every experience. Its stated aim is a “farm to table experience.” This can come about in the simplest or most elegant form.

Three restaurants on The Farm

premises are Morning Glory, The Farm Kitchen and Quiescence. Morning Glory provides a breakfast and brunch patio menu, including house baked muffins, locally made sausages and other dishes. The Farm Kitchen, oldest of the three restaurants, aims at picnic and patio lunches, with sandwiches, soups and baked goods served in picnic baskets. Dogs are welcome in this section.

Quiescence provides fine dining with a refined rustic menu. For both indoor and outdoor dining, locally produced meat and wine are available with uncomplicated American-style meals. Chef Dustin Christofolo heads

up the Quiescence kitchen.

As stated, the Farm is much more than a series of restaurants. The Botanica market offers local products for gardens and kitchens. The Succulentia is a greenhouse and outdoor space that nurtures special rare, exotic cacti and succulents for sale. It also has a respectable collection of staged show specimens in containers, which have been made by noted ceramicists. Maya’s Garden offers a farmers market on Sunday, from 9am to 2pm, offering fresh produce and herbs.

Utopia is a massage and yoga studio





Outdoor setup courtesy of The Farm at South Mountain



Entrance to The Farm at South Mountain, Photo Maralyn D. Hill

that also bills itself as “energy clearing, healing movement, dancing... and other healing arts.” Lisa Carter, photographer, specializes in wedding and family portraits, usually done on The Farm premises.

Events that can be planned at The Farm at South Mountain (over 100 last year) include weddings, bridal and maternity showers, corporate parties, an annual wine festival and various casual events. With 100 pecan trees originally planted, fruits from these trees can be picked and enjoyed by visitors.

Attendees at our International Food Wine & Travel Writers Association outdoor luncheon included two board members from the organization, several members and representatives from the Phoenix and Mesa Convention Bureaus and some local potential members.

Chef Aaron Newell provided delicious fare. Our menu consisted of the

following: local pulled pork sliders, petite chicken apple date sandwiches, garden grilled asparagus, wheat berry salad, house-made roasted garlic hummus, farm pecan squares and pecan shortbread cookies – made from scratch.

Favorites of Maralyn and Norm included local pulled pork sliders, pecan shortbread cookies made, as they say, “from scratch,” and farm pecan squares. The salads were outstanding and it would be next to impossible to pick a favorite, as they were all unique and distinctive in flavor. Everything was served family style, so you could indulge in whatever you liked best.

After lunch, we walked off some calories with a quick, but informative, tour of The Farm. As we walked by the large stone grove, we discovered that all the stones we laid by hand without any mortar or cement holding them together, including the



Stone oven in stone courtyard, courtesy of The Farm at South Mountain



stone oven where pizza is cooked.

We asked if The Farm harvests its pecans. They don't. Locals seem to know when they are ready and show up to pick and harvest. They flock in every year without fail and are welcomed. The Farm harvests what they plant and the rows of fresh vegetables are tended with loving

care by The Farm's gardener, Maya Dailey. They also have plenty of chickens, so the eggs are all fresh. In addition, we saw the greenhouse and the cacti and succulent garden called Succulentia.

All in all, it was a most delightful lunch. We had enjoyed a lunch there last summer and have dined at

Quiessence once. Since this is only about a forty-minute drive for us, we intend to go back frequently to The Farm at South Mountain. We know Morning Glory Café is always filled with regulars.

We did manage to get the recipe for the shortbread cookies to share with you, as well as The Farm's famous

sweet potato salad. These are served regularly in The Farm Kitchen.

### Sweet Potato Salad Serves 6 to 8

- 1 pound sweet potatoes
- ¼ cup pecan pieces, toasted
- ¼ cup dried cranberries
- 1 bunch green onions, chopped



Quiessence entree,  
Courtesy of The  
Farm at South  
Mountain



Pork Bar B Q sliders,  
Photo Maralyn D. Hill



Pecan shortbread cookies,  
Photo Maralyn D. Hill



Garden grilled  
asparagus,  
Photo Maralyn  
D. Hill



Rainbow cauliflower salad,  
Photo Maralyn D. Hill

2 tablespoons olive oil  
salt and pepper to taste  
chipotle vinaigrette (see recipe below)

Dice potatoes ½ inch thick. Toss with olive oil, salt, and pepper.

Bake in 325 degree Fahrenheit oven for 15-20 minutes. When potatoes

are tender, let cool slightly and toss with remaining ingredients.

Coat with vinaigrette until desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper. Serve warm or cold.

### Chipotle Vinaigrette

2 tablespoons (or to taste) canned chipotle chiles

1 cup canola oil  
1 shallot  
juice of one lime  
½ tablespoon honey  
1 tablespoon sherry vinegar  
½ tablespoon molasses  
1 garlic clove  
2 tablespoons chopped chives  
salt and pepper

Mix all ingredients in a blender or food processor.

### Pecan Shortbread Cookies

1 pound butter (4 sticks)  
2 cups sugar  
2 eggs  
4 cups flour  
1 teaspoon salt  
1½ cups chopped pecans  
whole pecans (about 50)  
powdered sugar (about 2 cups)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

Cream butter and sugar in mixer on low speed. Add eggs one at a time. Add flour and salt slowly. Add chopped pecans.

Scoop a generous tablespoon of dough onto cookie sheet and press a whole pecan into the center of each cookie.

Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for twenty minutes or until edges are golden brown.

Allow cookies to cool, then roll in powdered sugar.\* Makes about 3½ dozen cookies.

**\*Authors Note:** You can sprinkle powdered sugar, if you do not want them coated quite so much.

We hope if you are in Phoenix, you will have the opportunity to visit The Farm at South Mountain. If not, the recipes can let you experience a little bit of it at home.

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Sweet potato salad,  
Photo The Farm at  
South Mountain



Pecan squares,  
Photo Maralyn D. Hill



Banquet setup,  
Courtesy of The  
Farm at South  
Mountain

