

DRIVE PAST THE DRIVE-THRU'S TOWARD A HEALTHIER ROAD TRIP

New Healthy Travel Guide Shows You How to Slow Down and Savor California

The idea came to Patricia Hamilton on a road trip several years ago as she scanned a drive-thru menu in hopes of finding something that wouldn't clog her arteries or put pounds on her hips. Hamilton, a seasoned traveler and a fan of healthy, natural foods, wondered why it was always so hard to find good places to eat and exercise while on the road.

That's when, amidst the glare of the McMenu, the real light bulb went on: Hamilton realized what she and travelers like her needed was a guide that would direct them to the healthy restaurants and markets and great walking sites in the areas they were exploring, or even in their own towns. Unable to find one, she decided to create one, and hit the road again in search of all the healthy hotspots she could find.

Three years and many wonderful trips later, Patricia has just published *California Healthy*, a unique travel guide that celebrates the art of healthy living on the road. The guide's first edition focuses on Southern California, covering San Luis Obispo to San Diego counties. Each county chapter features detailed listings of health-oriented restaurants, cafés, and whole food markets (including vegetarian and vegan options); organic farms and wineries; parks, beaches, town centers and walking trails; and natural food, art and cultural festivals. Convenient maps and directions show readers how to reach each place from the freeway and major roads.

Unlike many conventional travel books, *California Healthy* speaks specifically to health-conscious readers who prefer natural and organic foods and like to exercise in the great outdoors. Statistics show Hamilton's target readership is growing fast. In recent years, sales of organic foods has risen about 20 percent. At the same time, a survey published late last year found that three out of four food shoppers believe what they eat at home is healthier than meals they eat out.

Also, over the past three decades, the U.S. has seen a 14 percent rise in the number of meals eaten away from home, and fast food in particular is often linked to rising cases of obesity and other nutritional problems. For travelers and others who dine away from home but want to stay healthy, Hamilton's guide arrives in the nick of time.

Hamilton, a fifth-generation California native, has authored three other travel books and numerous articles on food and travel in the area. She is also an ardent supporter of sustainable farming and of the Slow Food Movement, which promotes and preserves the culture of organic, locally grown food.

"I have had a wonderful time reconnecting with California and learning about the natural and organic farms and restaurants ...," Hamilton writes in her introduction to *California Healthy*. "In particular, I have grown to appreciate the critical work and creativity of the

farmers, fishers, and culinary artists who help protect our planet by using sustainable methods to produce their delicious, nourishing food.”

With her book, Hamilton hopes to guide other people toward places where they can meet the farmers and others who support Earth-friendly methods of producing their food. Hamilton often takes her young grandchildren, Zack and Grace, on her road trips. She believes it’s important to educate them, and her readers, on where their food comes from.

“Now, when we go to the farmers markets in different places, the kids will go right up to the farmers and talk to them about how the food is grown. They need that information if they’re going to eat healthy, and one day help protect the sources of that good food,” she says.

Hamilton is joined in her effort by Stanford University’s executive chef Bruce Biron, who contributes a colorful collection of whole food recipes to the book. Biron’s delectable dishes highlight California’s diverse natural flavors and rich cultural heritage, and encourage the use of organic, local and Super Food ingredients.

“The collection embraces fresh, organic foods that move directly from the farm to our tables,” writes Biron. “That’s the way it used to be, and I believe it’s time to return to our roots.”

To help readers walk off those healthy meals and breathe in plenty of fresh California air, the guide also features walking tips from Janel Willette, a certified exercise physiologist. Willette’s approach to fitness draws on many Eastern traditions that seek the perfect balance of mind, body and spirit within each individual.

Hamilton hopes her guide offers travelers and others a way of simply slowing down and savoring life both on the road, and at home.

“It’s about recognizing the value of good, fresh food and the influence of local cultures and traditions on its preparation,” she explains. “We need to slow down in all areas of our lives, but especially when it comes to food.”

California Healthy is published by Park Place Publications in Pacific Grove, Calif., and is available at bookstores and online outlets nationwide.

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California Healthy is available from Park Place Publications, 591 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove, CA 93950; phone: 888.702.4500; e-mail: publishingbiz@sbcglobal.net.