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Meals from the Farmers Market Made Easy

"From Farmers to Families and Friends" provides free instruction on making affordable meals from local sources.

SEATTLE (July 17, 2013) – Beginning this Friday, visitors to the Farmers Market at Pike Place Market can not only select from a wide variety of fresh, locally grown produce, they can take home techniques and recipes for turning it into easy, affordable meals.

"From Farmers to Families and Friends" brings free cooking classes to Pike Place Market to demystify what cooking from fresh local ingredients can look and taste like. This 10-week series is designed to give people who are intimidated by fresh ingredients, or who think that shopping at farmers markets is not an affordable option for them, the experience, skills, means and confidence to cook from "scratch."

The vision for the project was developed by Diane LaVonne, a local cooking instructor and owner of Diane's Market Kitchen. "We are no longer spending time making and sharing food in our homes with people we love," said Diane. "For generations food was, and can be a way to bind us together. I want to bring that back into every home."

Every Friday from July 19 through September 20, Diane will be teaching four classes a day – at 11 am, 12 pm, 1 pm and 2 pm. Each class will last approximately 45 minutes and include tips, samples and recipes. Classes are limited to 25 participants each on a first-come, first-served basis.

"We are pleased to be partnering with Diane to bring these valuable cooking skills to our visitors," said Ben Franz-Knight, Executive Director of the Pike Place Market PDA. "Diane is not only a passionate ambassador for cooking with locally grown food, she is an engaging instructor as well."

Recipes for the 2013 series include cucumber blueberry salad, Barton's Salmon Cakes, Mid-Summer Pasta Sauce with Summer Squash, Greek Bean Salad and Diane's Mac and Cheese.

Diane's Market Kitchen offers a unique culinary experience where connecting cooking, companionship, and community combine to create a memory; not just a meal. Diane LaVonne fashioned Diane's Market Kitchen by combining her passion for food and wine, her talent for teaching and creating a comfortable, inviting environment, and her commitment to balancing those for a life of health and well-being.

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The Pike Place Market is one of the oldest continuously operating public markets in the U.S. It is a Historic District with 250 commercial businesses, 80 farmers, 225 craftspeople, 400 street performers, and 500 residents. In addition, there are social services to help downtown's low-income residents. It is often called the "Soul of Seattle."

The Pike Place Market Preservation & Development Authority (PDA) is a not-for-profit, public corporation chartered by the City of Seattle in 1973 to manage the properties in the nine-acre Market Historic District. The PDA is required to preserve, rehabilitate and protect the Market's buildings, increase opportunities for farm and food retailing in the Market, incubate and support small and marginal businesses, and provide services for low-income people. www.pikeplacemarket.org

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