



in full bloom

UNCORK THE (ORGANIC) CHAMPAGNE: this year, Cafe Flora, Seattle's premier veg restaurant, celebrates its 21st anniversary. Joining the crew at Cafe Flora soon after its launch, Janine Doran now serves as executive chef. She's totally on board with the restaurant's commitment to cooking with seasonal, local, sustainable ingredients.



For a taste of Cafe Flora's early fall flavors, visit vegetariantimes.com/articles/local-color.

VT What explains Cafe Flora's longevity?

Doran We always call our customers guests here, because we think of Cafe Flora as our home, and we welcome them in to join us. If someone comes to your house and is vegan or can't eat gluten or soy, you're going to make something they can eat. We feel the same way here. Also, we use quality ingredients, and we make everything from scratch. When we started, we were one of the only restaurants featuring local produce, and now it has become a huge movement, which we love!

VT How do you keep seasonal cooking creative when you're limited by the produce you can choose?

Doran We're lucky to get such great local produce in the Northwest. Some of my favorites are stinging nettles and fiddlehead ferns. People are always surprised to see nettles on our menu, but once they try them they are hooked on the nettles' earthy flavor. One of the best parts of my job is to take different flavors from around the world and give them a Northwest twist. Our Oaxaca Tacos are a classic dish that's been on the menu since we opened; we adapt the dish as the seasons change, using a fresh pico de gallo in the summer months, when our tomato farmer has incredible tomatoes, and a roasted chipotle salsa in the winter. We'll also change up our garnishes depending on what's in season. We used edible tulips last spring to add color.

VT Any advice for increasing a dish's appeal?

Doran I always look at the visual aspect of the dish, and also at the different textures so that the dish isn't all one note.

VT What's the most valuable cooking tip you've picked up working in Cafe Flora's kitchen?

Doran Never be afraid to try something new. 