

THE MONTHLY

The East Bay's Premier Magazine of Culture and Commerce

July 2008 Issue

Be East Bay Feature

Taste

There's probably no better way to begin a **culinary walking tour of North Berkeley** than with a chai-almond smoothie called "I Am Eternally Inspired" at the vegan Café Gratitude on Shattuck Avenue. Lisa Rogovin, a self-described "epicurean concierge" who is newly charged with leading a tour of this richly historic district, says she is, in fact, "eternally inspired." As well she should be. At the behest of the North Shattuck Association, Rogovin will spend every Thursday afternoon, 2 to 5 p.m., talking up the history of California cuisine and introducing people to the tastes on tap in a few short blocks. This is the first of several Berkeley neighborhood walking tours slated to begin this year.

You'll meet Rogovin at Café Gratitude for your emotionally charged smoothie, get some Gourmet Ghetto history and likely talk with an owner. Then you'll stroll north to the Guerilla Café (a few doors down from Starbucks) where you may sample a homemade waffle and enjoy a buzz from the Blue Bottle coffee that is touted as the ultimate brew. Oh the places you'll go: Café de la Paz, Saul's, Vintage Berkeley for a wine tasting, Peet's for a sample, Soop, Alegio, Masses and más. While Chez Panisse will loom large for its culinary pioneering, the tour will only stop to ponder the menu posted outside. The tour will end at the North Berkeley Farmer's Market where you will get a reusable bag for your fruits and veggies.

"For me, it's all about going below the surface," says Rogovin, who used to work for *Gourmet* magazine. "You can just pop things in your mouth, but it's better to be able to connect with what the business is all about." The cost is \$60, including the food, culinary education and even the juicy inspiration. For more info: (415) 806-5970 or www.inthekitchenwithlisa.com. Make reservations at least 48 hours in advance.

-- Andrea Lampros