

Innisfree Farm hosts gathering of herb enthusiasts

Gathering largest ever held in Western Canada

Innisfree Farm in Royston recently played host to an extraordinary and exciting event – the largest gathering of herbalists and herbal enthusiasts ever held in Western Canada.

Celebrating 40 years of the Canadian Herbalists Association of BC, the oldest herb association in North America, and highlighting the upwelling of public interest in growing, harvesting and making herbal medicines, Innisfree farm and Harmonic Arts Botanical Dispensary created an epic event.

On June 1 and 2, over 200 people thronged to Innisfree to listen to 12 speakers give 27 classes and six guided herb walks. Lectures included subjects as diverse as managing menopause naturally, making fomentations and compresses, herbal first aid and healing the gut with herbs.

For the less medically inclined there was a sacred tea ceremony, a talk on subtle plant energetics and various food-themed classes like fermenting meads or making bone marrow broths. Daily yoga and Qigong, nature walks and guided walks in the apothecary (medicine) garden, as well as a full child care program rounded out the roster.

Instructors included herbal legends like Terry Willard from Wild Rose College in Calgary and Ryan Drum PhD, the seaweed specialist who lives in the San Juan's, as well as local experts including Chanchal Cabrera and Amanda Howe and almost a dozen others offering



HERBALISTS AND HERBAL enthusiasts gather at Innisfree Farm in Royston for a weekend of everything herbal.

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classes to suit every taste.

The farm's orchard was a sea of tents, softly glowing solar lights safely guiding people along the grassy paths at night. The brand new, food-safe kitchen was the busiest spot on the farm, with a 180 people enjoying the full meal plan. Innisfree farm chef-in-residence Joseph Forest, ably assisted by the Gourmet Girls of Cumberland, turned out spectacular volumes of delicious and healthy food featuring farm fresh produce and (of course) herbs. Breakfasts included millet and quinoa porridge with fresh and dried fruits, seeds and nut milk. Lunches included crispy fresh greens decorated with edible flowers and just har-

vested herbs. Saturday dinner featured baked wild salmon with Innisfree's famed rhubarb chutney. There was an all-day hot herbal tea bar, plus herbal tonics and superfood elixirs served up by Harmonic Arts. The Chocolate Chaga mushroom Chai was a popular immune-boosting hit. There was even a dance on Saturday night with Vancouver musician and social activist, Buckman Coe. Organizers Chanchal Cabrera (Innisfree Farm) and Yarrow Willard (Harmonic Arts) were happily surprised by their success.

"We put this together in less than three months with no advertising, just word of mouth, and hoped for 50 or 60 people" says Chanchal. "It was

clearly an event whose time had come, there are so many people waking up now to the value and importance of herbal medicine. We were thrilled to get such a huge response and we certainly hope to do it again in two years' time."

The Canadian Herbalists Association of BC sponsored a forum at the gathering to present its work and to discuss some of the legal and regulatory issues facing herbalists in Canada today. As well, the association's annual general meeting was hosted on Sunday morning with presentations by committee chairs and financial reports. Three new board members were elected and a new president appointed. The association is the self-

regulating body that sets educational standards, scope of practice and codes of ethics for the profession in this province.

Representatives of the CHA of BC are appointed to a national Canadian Council of Herbalists Associations that is an advisory body with

opportunity to consult in Ottawa with the regulators and law makers to represent the

rights of herbalists and the profession.

— Vancouver Island Herb Gathering

FUTURE SHOP – Correction Notice

We regret to inform customers that certain pages in the June 21 flyer show incorrect effective dates. Please be advised that the promotional flyer period is in fact from June 21 - June 27, 2013. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused our valued customers.



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