



NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC

NIAGARA FALLS
for FAMILIES

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TRAVELER

ALL TRAVEL. ALL THE TIME | March 2011

A TASTE OF FRANCE

Alan Richman turns his
love of food into a pursuit
of true culture PAGE 46

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THE NEXT
ADVENTURE



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Scones from
MaryJane's
Farm, Idaho.

company Off-the-Beaten Path. “The more urban we get, the more disconnected we can be, to the point where kids don’t know milk comes from cows.” Here are five places where they can learn that. Dig up more at state tourism websites or registries, such as *farmstayus.com* or *ruralbounty.com*.

STONY CREEK FARM, WALTON, NEW YORK

Visit this farm in the rolling hills of New York’s Catskill Mountains and you get your own safari-style tent and provisions available round-the-clock. The barn cum “honesty shop” is stocked with farm-raised beef, pork, chicken, lamb, freshly laid eggs, seasonal organic veggies, and glass bottles of milk topped with a thick layer of cream.

While hosts Kate and Dan Marsiglio and their two children welcome a hand with chores, including digging potatoes, baling hay, or milking Sierra (their Jersey cow), “it’s all up to guests how dirty they want to get,” assures Kate. Kids have free rein on the 85 acres of pasture and the eponymous creek that cuts through it as well as access to a neighboring swimming hole. When one guest fretted about his child playing in the mud last summer, his wife responded, “That’s why we’re here; he can’t do that in Brooklyn.”

The farm’s six canvas-wall, hardwood-floor tents are the hallmark of Feather Down Farms, with whom the couple partnered in 2009. Each is equipped with rustic furnishings, plush bedding, oil lanterns, and a cast-iron wood-burning stove to cook your own meals.

On Saturday evenings, the Marsiglios fire up an outdoor oven for homemade bread and pizza—green tomato, purple basil, and lamb sausage is a house favorite—and a chance for guests to mingle. Other nights, the activities—card games, stargazing, sleeping to the sound of the babbling brook—are up to you. From \$189 per tent, sleeps six; three-night minimum stay; *www.stonycreekfarm.org*.

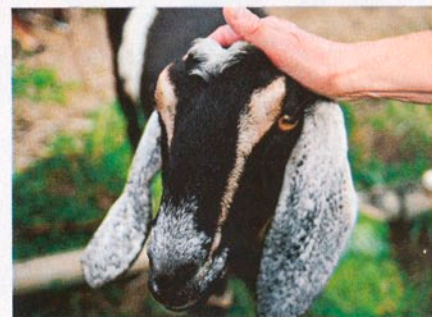


Farm living: (Clockwise from above) Guests read stories outdoors at MaryJane’s Farm in Idaho, roast hot dogs over a campfire at Stony Creek Farm in New York, and pet goats at Rinconada Dairy Farm in California.

RINCONADA DAIRY FARM, SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA

Sprawling 92 acres in the verdant coastal hills of California’s San Luis Obispo County, Rinconada Dairy Farm is an ideal base for exploring the nearby wine country of Paso Robles and Santa Ynez Valley. But the ranch has become a destination in itself, especially for families from Los Angeles or San Francisco who pine for the country. “Adults come because they may remember visits to their grandparents’ farm. Kids get to climb on rocks and run around,” says host Christine Maguire.

Maguire was a city girl before a stint on a farm in Devon, England, sold her on living off the land. She and her husband, Jim, moved back to their native California and began raising sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. Today, Rinconada also makes award-winning sheep- and goat-milk cheeses. Hosting visitors was a natural extension for the vocal advocates of



integrated agriculture, a holistic approach where nothing is wasted.

Unless you’re game for milking the sheep before dawn, days begin in the kitchen of the restored hacienda-style ranch house with a breakfast that may include an egg strata, scrapple, whole-grain waffles, and an array of jams and fruit butters—all made from ingredients grown or raised on the farm. Guests can pitch in with gardening or relax under one of the sprawling oak trees with a book. Forgot one? You’ll find a copy of Michael Pollan’s best-selling treatise on food, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*, in each of the two guest rooms at the farm. From \$150 per night; two-night minimum stay; *www.rinconadadairy.com*.

FARMHAND FOR A WEEK

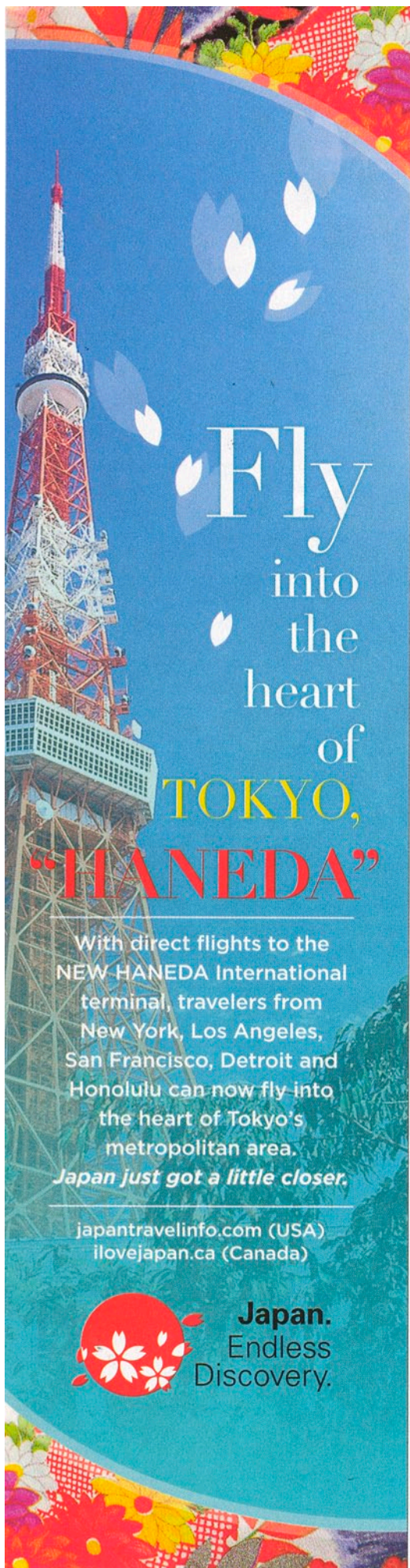
Fancy working at an olive grove in Tuscany? It can be done.

An international network of farms lets you indulge in your rural fantasies. **World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms** (WWOOF) connects willing volunteers with farms in more than 50 countries, including Italy, France, and Holland. It was founded

in 1971 by a London secretary whose craving for the countryside led her to organize a volunteer weekend at a local farm. Today, participants get room and board; farms get help with chores ranging from shoveling manure to mending fences. So-called

Wwoofers pay a fee to access the directories in each country and should be willing to work up to six hours a day. Lodging can be basic and the work mundane, but for many—membership in the U.S. chapter doubled in the last year—the opportunity to travel and learn about organic farming is worth the elbow grease (*www.wwoof.org*). —M.L.





Fly into the heart of TOKYO, “HANEDA”

With direct flights to the NEW HANEDA International terminal, travelers from New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Detroit and Honolulu can now fly into the heart of Tokyo's metropolitan area.
Japan just got a little closer.

japantravelinfo.com (USA)
ilovejapan.ca (Canada)



Japan.
Endless
Discovery.

SMART TRAVELER

MARYJANE'S FARM, MOSCOW, IDAHO

Set in northern Idaho's Palouse prairie, MaryJane's Farm welcomes guests to stay in six tastefully appointed permanent tents in a grove of hundred-year-old walnut trees. Guests rise early and gather around an outdoor campfire for elaborate spreads of organic eggs, meats, and fruits sourced almost entirely from the farm. Lunch is a packed picnic. For dinner, guests head back to the campfire.

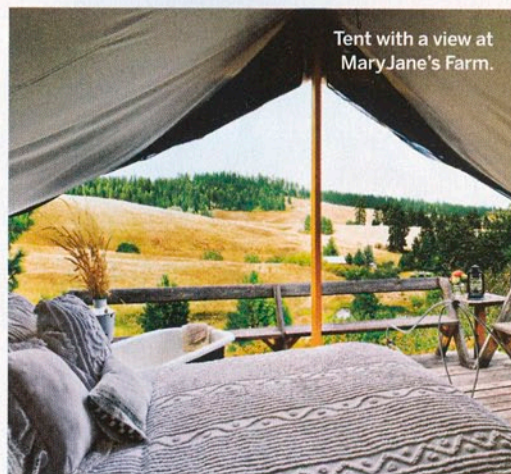
A sort of homespun Martha Stewart, entrepreneur MaryJane Butters has built a mini-empire out of her passion for organic farming; she publishes an organic lifestyle magazine, writes books, and markets everything from organic backpacking food to hat stands with her signature farm-girl flair. But for visitors down on the farm, life is slow. There are Jersey cows, horses, chickens, and fruit trees to admire.

Guests can take up one of the lost arts of rural life. Butters leads seminars on everything from chopping firewood to growing your own natural starter for sourdough bread. Later, relax sore muscles by soaking in one of the farm's outdoor heated claw-foot bathtubs. From \$179 per night; two-night minimum; www.maryjanefarm.org/lbb.

FINNRIVER FARM & CIDERY, CHIMACUM, WASHINGTON

A fifth-generation farmer, Keith Kisler and his wife Crystie are part of the new guard working the land of Chimacum, a rural community on Washington's Olympic Peninsula, an hour's drive and a ferry ride from Seattle. Finnriver Farm and Cidery began as a blueberry venture six years ago and has evolved into a 33-acre organic operation that grows wheat to mill its own grain and heirloom apples to produce its own hard cider. The family also keeps honeybees, raises chickens, and tends the occasional pig, cow, sheep, or goat, all of which present ample opportunity for visitors to get their hands dirty. "They can fold into whatever's happening on the farm," says Crystie, "whether it's blueberry picking, egg gathering, milling flour, or pressing apples."

Wander the interpretive trail along the salmon stream that cuts through the farm and wind up at the cidery for a tasting. Make the short drive into Port Townsend, a Victorian seaport turned New Age mecca, or head to Olympic National Park, about an hour away, for a day hike along



Tent with a view at MaryJane's Farm.

Hurricane Ridge with alpine views. Digs are a shingled, two-bedroom cottage, and meals are DIY with farm-fresh goodies delivered to your doorstep. In warm weather, join the Kislers and neighbors for wood-fired pizza and outdoor movies. From \$150 per night; www.finnriver.com.

TREVIN FARMS, SUDBURY, VERMONT

Fledging fromagers at Trevin Farms in west-central Vermont usually find that the hardest part of making chèvre is milking the goats. "It looks easy," says farmer Kevin McNaught, "but it's not." Guests who come to learn cheesemaking usually find the rest of the process a cinch by comparison. Besides adding enzymes to goats' milk and cutting the curd, making goat cheese involves a lot of waiting, leaving plenty of time to roam the farm's 40 acres of meadow and woodlands. Guests can also get a lesson in hitching up Tyrone, a Percheron draft horse, for a carriage ride or soak up panoramic views of the Green Mountains from Adirondack chairs on the hillside. Nearby is the 20,000-acre Moosalamoo National Recreation Area, with some 70 miles of trails for hiking, bird-watching, and cross-country skiing.

McNaught left his job as a chef in Boston to raise Nubian goats in the Champlain Valley with partner Troy Peabody three years ago. The move paid off, and now they eagerly share their cheesemaking chops and Cape-style farmhouse with those who crave a taste of the New England pastoral life. "People are surprised when they drink goat milk for the first time," he says. "Their response is 'Wow!'"

The creamy fruits of guests' labor figure prominently in the dinner menu—sautéed atop a pile of greens or crowning a braised pork loin, with plenty left over to take home. Rooms from \$100 per night; weekend cheesemaking package from \$295; www.trevinfarms.com. ■