

Rocky Mountain Farmers, Ranchers & Artisans Influence Denver Dining



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The term may be overused these days but the intention remains relevant. Diners want inventive dishes made with the freshest possible ingredients and least possible impact on the environment. Chefs want to offer exactly that. One result of this synergistic aspiration is a new focus on something that had all but disappeared from the American landscape in the age of big agriculture—the small farm. Now, local organic produce, animals raised humanely, handcrafted cheese and sausage, house-made canned and preserved goods and a desire to waste nothing all have become the new normal in trendsetting restaurants, and [Denver](#) is well ahead of the curve.

The drive to use local purveyors and ingredients is strong in Colorado. From pizza at Sazza to multi-course meals at [Root Down](#), there are restaurants at which farm-to-table is not a trend but a sustained passion. One of the best-known chefs in this space is Alex Seidel, who has [Fruition](#), [Mercantile Dining & Provision](#) and his own Fruition Farms, which provides ingredients for both restaurants. Equally passionate are the chefs at urban Farmer in the Oxford Hotel and 15/Fifty in the Sheraton Downtown Denver., proving that good, locally sourced food and sustainability are important to hotel chefs, too. There are many more. The best news is that this is no longer a trend; it's the new norm, at least here in Denver.

8 15/FIFTY RESTAURANT



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Yes, this Sheraton is a huge convention hotel, part of Marriott's Convention & Resort Network, but forget preconceived ideas. Its restaurant, 15/Fifty, is as "farm-to-table" as any in town. Flavorful, beautifully constructed dishes and cocktails are created using ingredients from Colorado's artisan purveyors, and that's not a gone-tomorrow trend or an afterthought but a dedicated mindset that extends even to banquet food. It all comes down to passion and vision and the Sheraton F&B staff has both. "We're really passionate about what we do and doing the ordinary wouldn't make us happy to come to work," says Chef Scott Skomal. The menu highlights farms and ranches the chefs source from, and dishes containing local ingredients are marked with a Colorado flag. Menus change seasonally but expect such delights as Tomato Jam Flatbread or an inventive take on Steak Frites. Whiskey lovers should try the Denver Smoked Whiskey Lemonade.