

Let food be thy medicine ?



By Jim Eadie

‘Let food be thy medicine, and medicine be thy food’ is famously attributed to Hippocrates, the ancient Greek physician considered to be the father of modern medicine. Even in 400BC, he had clearly recognized the connection between eating well and good health, and the special value of some foods in promoting or regaining good health.

Madeleine Marentette, founder of Grail Springs Retreat Centre for Wellbeing located near Bancroft has for the past 21 years been offering award winning holistic health and wellness retreats for women and men who are looking to find rest, groundedness, healing, and education about self care and good health.

‘People are looking for ways to connect to the planet, and to each other,’ she said. ‘Many people have never experienced that, it is still an intellectual idea for them. We at Grail Springs are helping our guests to live long happy lives, while we no longer contribute to big factory farms. Grail Springs thrives and guests enjoy the lovingly prepared, delicious vegetarian food.’

Marentette admits that her work in the animal rights movement led her to a risky business decision according to her advisors in 2008, to stop serving meat at their tables. She believes the decision is not only in alignment with her own values, but comes with many additional health benefits for her and her guests.

Working with Chef Tomoko, as well as staff and the community of guests, a recipe book seemed to be a very sensible choice to document their work, which views good food as medicine for good health, and a resource that guests could take home with them to support their personal life changing work.

On June 10, over 100 people attended the retreat centre to launch the new book: ‘Recipes for Life: Beautiful food and words to live by.’ Marentette repeated the words of Hippocrates as she spoke about the new book.

‘This is a compilation of recipes for life,’ she said, ‘beautiful food and words of wisdom’ from our community, accompanied by photos of Grail Springs Retreat Centre for Wellbeing.’

Mayor Bernice Jenkins noted that everywhere she travels away from Bancroft, she meets people who know about Grail Springs. ‘Even on a plane to Calgary,’ she told the gathering. ‘I picked up a magazine, and there was a story about Grail Springs. You are doing excellent work.’

The new book is 186 glossy pages of very beautiful photography, loaded with recipes for drinks, main courses, glazes, stews, snacks and desserts that are for the most part uncomplicated and using readily available ingredients. Copies of the book can be seen and purchased at Ashley's Bookstore in Bancroft.