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Chefs Go Fresh

The Georgetowner is partnering with Loudoun County, VA for a farm tour to introduce local purveyors to the Chefs of Washington, DC. And resurrect the popular "Chefs on Bikes" tradition.

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Patowmack Farm Offers Respite from the Holiday Madness

BY ROBERT HIGGINBOTHAM | DECEMBER 8TH, 2010 | [SHARE](#)



Chef Chris of Patowmack Farm in the garden

Thanksgiving is ancient history now. And as the trees shed those last few colorful stragglers refusing to join the pile, we're forced to face the fact that fall is coming to an end, and the cold is here to stay. Nonetheless, DC transforms almost overnight into a city of lights, as the yearly holiday festivities begin with the immediacy of instant oatmeal.

The annual lighting of the National Chanukah Menorah is already in full swing, and a 40-foot spruce tree sits discretely on the side, waiting to be unveiled. There are

parades, plays, concerts, cocktails, gift exchanges, gift returns, families and friends, cookie parties, party parties—just enough so that by the time the ball drops and the fireworks go off, you may well be writhing in bed at night, the sound of bells engrained within the hollows of your ears, trying to figure out where to put the extra 10 pounds you've tacked on.

As truly wonderful as it all is, it can (and will) get hectic and overwhelming. It's times like these we can be grateful for, and truly appreciate, a peaceful countryside. Who can refuse a jaunt over the hills—or over the river and through the woods—for quiet views and great food? What better escape for you and your loved ones to flee the city for a couple hours and soak up the holiday spirit together in quiet relaxation?

If this is ringing a bell and you need a place to go, we've got a few in mind. Places like the Billard's Patowmack Farm in Lovettesville, VA, just north along the river and west of Point of Rocks, are perfect for a respite from the holiday madness.

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With views overlooking the Potomac and the Point of Rocks Bridge, Beverly Morton Billard and Chuck Billard started Patowmack Farm in 1986 as a place to grow fresh herbs and seasonal vegetables. In 1998 they opened their restaurant, championing—and in many ways, pioneering—the farm-to-table concept. The Farm’s well known “Chef Christopher” focuses on providing fresh, organic produce straight from the grounds, paired with sustainable seafood and wild, natural meats.

Helping to maintain an environmental balance using sustainable practices is of the utmost importance to Chef Christopher and the Patowmack crew, and it’s never compromised on the menu. Such items include Truffle Roasted Jerusalem Artichoke, incorporating burgundy truffles, black trumpet mushroom powder and a mushroom puree. Or, on the more savory side, choices include dishes like Duck A L’Orange served with caramelized endive, juniper spice pesto, candied orange peel and grand marnier. As for dessert, one can’t go wrong with the Maple Crème Beignet, a dark chocolate ganache combined with shaved white chocolate and Virginia peanut streusel.

Everything on the menu is available a la carte, or as part of a 5-course prix fixe menu with optional wine pairings. And of course, vegetarian options are always available.

The exquisite high-ceilinged glass dining room at Patowmack Farm is open Thursday night through Saturday, and brunch is served on weekends, mixing in organic breakfast dishes into their already healthy repertoire.

More recently, the Farm has cooked up what they call “Thursday’s on the Farm,” as a way for the curious (or the repeat offender) to sample the unique tastes, much like tapas. Dishes are smaller (and priced accordingly) and served with organically infused cocktail options. The menus for both change weekly allowing for a wide range of what the Farm has to offer.

The Restaurant at Patowmack Farm has joined an elite crew of the most renowned dining experiences in the area (DC included), and not only for serving food, but for giving back as well. Earlier this month the Farm teamed up with INMED Partnerships for Children in an event goaled toward helping to stop child hunger, disease, abuse, neglect and violence. More specifically, the proceeds of the “Chef’s Collaborative Event” went toward establishing a greenhouse organic gardening system at the Loudoun County Homeless and Transitional Housing Shelter. They are hoping the greenhouse will provide both education and food year-round to those in need. It isn’t just good food they’re serving up at the Farm, it’s Good, period.

And if you’re not sold yet, Patowmack Farm throws in some wonderful special events every month to help coax you away from the concrete jungle. Whether it’s a jazz brunch, a top notch cooking class, or simply holiday music and great food (this year provided by Music by Anthem’s string quartet hosted on Dec 17 and Dec 18), there always seems to be something going on at the Patowmack Farm to spice up a great day spent in the country. Sided with a view of the bridge among rolling hills, while leaning back in a quiet gazebo miles away from food trucks, bus stops, pay stations and buildings over three stories tall, you may realize that, occasionally, the city of lights needs to be beat—at least for an hour or two.



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