



A Hunger for Travel

Food writing for an explorer's appetite.

● Curiosity makes the food and travel writer. Edina resident Terri Peterson Smith loves exploring new cuisines and culture. Interminable passion leads her to destinations worldwide but great finds are close to home too. This award-winning author's latest book, *Unique Eats and Eateries of the Twin Cities*, covers 89 restaurants within Minneapolis and St. Paul, along with one suburban honorable mention (Robbinsdale-based Travail Kitchen & Amusements). Some of the restaurants featured are nationally renowned, while others are lesser known, yet worthy finds.

Above all, Smith wants people to eat well and try something different. Her previous book, *Off the Beaten Page: The Best Trips for Lit Lovers, Book Clubs and Girls on Getaways*, showcases her joy of literary field trip travel, sparked by her avid reading routine and book club experiences.

"It's so easy to just stay in your little corner of the world," Smith says. "My big thing with all of my writing, especially

the books, is to encourage people to get out and meet different kinds of people, and travel, and learn about other people."

Throughout her journeys, the Indiana native has seen how individuals are more alike than different. She beams about her past trips, future plans and meals in between, but it's the people she encounters along the way that are her guiding inspiration. Her connection to a place is grounded by a connection to people even if she doesn't happen to speak the language.

It's not surprising that Smith's travel interests go beyond Europe and other traditional vacation sites. Morocco and Guatemala are some of her international favorites. Locally, she frequents the North Shore with its chain of state parks teeming with waterfalls and hiking trails. Recent ventures include visiting Amarillo, Texas along Route 66; biking Philadelphia historical parks and trails; and a road tripping literary tour of Quebec.

On her excursions, she takes special

By LEE OWENS Photos By EMILY J. DAVIS

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note of area events and history. These markers, along with an interesting character or two, and a bit of serendipity make for good story telling. For Smith, there's always another tale on the horizon.

Often a destination will have a literary association. “This is my thing; reading books and traveling to where they take place,” Smith says. “I've always been writing in some form.”

Look for Smith's byline in USA Today, Rova Magazine (fittingly an epic road trip journal) and on her Off the Beaten Page Travel blog, among other places. With two books to her credit, numerous magazine stories and years of public relations work, Smith knows how to wield a pen with prize results.

In a testimony to her creative talent, Smith came up with a one-of-a-kind story about the lost tradition of keeping mice as pets (even showing them like dogs.) Her idea was an offshoot of an interview with a scientist working on mice research. The story won the Michael DeBakey Journalism Award from the Foundation for Biomedical Research. Mice are just one of many subjects that have taken her to places out of the norm.

“If you are a curious person, writing gives you the ability to investigate many different things. I am a very curious person, maybe to a fault,” Smith says. “Travel is my big thing right now, writing about travel for the last four years—travel and food writing, they kind of go together.”

Eating is a natural component of traveling and Smith enjoys both to the fullest. Dining, especially when alone, is an opportunity to make new friends, she says. “When you go into a restaurant you have license to talk to people and usually they're happy to talk to you about why they cook the way they do,” she explains.

For Minneapolis dining, Smith gives high marks to Young Joni and Hai Hai. At 50th and France, “I think Coalition is



Honfleur, France



Grand Cafe in Minneapolis.

Smith views dining as a natural component to traveling and an opportunity to meet new people and learn new things.



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really fun in Edina. That's my go-to spot in Edina," Smith says. "There's something for everyone there, and I love the atmosphere."

At home, she and her husband both cook. What goes on their table depends on the season. Middle Eastern foods have earned a year-round place. "In winter-time, I'm the queen of soup, every kind of soup," Smith says. "It's hilarious. My husband says, not 'what are you cooking for dinner,' but 'what kind of soup are you

cooking for dinner?' It's easy though, just make it in a pot, and it's fun."

For dessert, Smith can't get enough pie. "Even during the Christmas season, I love pie and even eat it for breakfast," she says. She makes her own pies and to make prep easier uses Pillsbury pie crust—something her mother would not approve of, she laughs.

Of course with all that pie around there's got to be some ice cream. Smith is a fan of homemade and relies on a cook-

book she discovered at Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams shop in Columbus, Ohio. A homemade holiday flavor would lean more toward a "chocolate-nutty-salted-caramel-type thing," she says.

Despite all this cooking, dining, traveling and writing, Smith shows no sign of a pause. Her next literary undertaking might be another book and a first-ever fiction story. That's a new genre for Smith, but then again, there's always something to explore. **E**