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MARKET MUSINGS: Next Generation Vendor

By Jan Freedman

The first two weeks of the Farmers' Market have gone well as people became familiar with our new layout. So far, the response has been very positive from shoppers and vendors alike.

Many of our regular, full time vendors are already there, but as usual, some of our farmers will arrive a bit later in the spring when they have more produce available. I did receive a newsletter from Willowtree Farm that they now have asparagus and rhubarb ready, so you can expect to see those two popular crops at the Market any day. After that, more and more produce will begin to appear as the season progresses.

This year we have several new vendors for you to meet. The first one I want to tell you about is actually the granddaughter of a much-loved former vendor, Attilio Caschera, who produced and sold his olive oil at our Market and others.

Maia was inspired by her late grandfather and began on her own journey to create a brand of delicious meals to promote wellness in a convenient and accessible way.

Maia grew up in a family of entrepreneurs who owned businesses including flower shops and pasta shops, as well as producing packaged frozen food for large retail stores. All of this combined to spark in Maia a passion for the food industry. She has previously worked in restaurants as hostess and a frontline employee, but found that it wasn't for her. Following in her mother's footsteps, she was motivated to start her own company, selling pre-packaged meals with healthy grains and legumes and its own unique blend of herbs and spices.

Maia's vision was for a company that provided customers with healthy, flavourful food at an affordable price. Her inspiration developed out of her relationship with her mother. While growing up, Maia spent lots of time cooking alongside her mom and, as she grew older, she took over most of the cooking. The motivation for each dish arises from Maia's love of food. She visits restaurants specializing in different cuisines, discovers a dish she loves, and tries it at home using healthier and more affordable alternatives. She loves testing different flavor combinations to see how they bring a unique twist and flavor profile to her creations.

When not in the kitchen, Maia is a student at the University of Toronto, majoring in Philosophy and Anthropology. She is also a RYT 300 yoga teacher. Maia is both passionate and dedicated to providing her students with an environment in which they can connect the mind and body through yoga, building both mental and physical strength, and reaching their full potential collectively in class.

?Maia's World of Flavour? aims to provide you with the healthiest of organic grains and legumes as well as authentic Italian food products. Each product from the pasta sauces is made from her family's recipes, her risotto packages and even the olives have their own unique herb and spice blends that invite you to ?travel the world through taste?. Everything is packaged with an abundance of love and health in mind.

Please visit Maia's booth in the park. She will be happy to describe her ingredients and recommend how best to prepare her packaged meals. I have already tried a number of her products which has served to whet my appetite to try more!

Please join us on Saturday, May 26 for our first Special Event, our GRAND OPENING. We will have an awesome band playing, The Therapy Seekers, some amazing door prizes as well as a few surprises. There will be some short speeches by local dignitaries at 11 and lots of fun activities, including the usual arts and crafts for children. We hope that you will join us.

See you at the Market!