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507 MAGAZINE

International garden opens gates for Flavor Fest

The fest will focus on tour of the garden and the plants grown there — many of which will be unfamiliar to visitors.

Written By: John Sievers | 5:00 am, Sep. 17, 2020



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The Village Community Garden and Learning Center, photographed by Amanda Nigon-Crowley. (Contributed photo)

There's one place in Rochester where growers from Cambodia, Laos, India, Mexico, Honduras, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leon and Cameroon can all be found: [The Village Community Garden and Learning Center](#).

Locals can get to know the garden, sample food, listen to music, and participate in a hands-on art project at the garden's FARM Flavor Fest from 4 to 7 p.m. Saturday.

"FARM" is capitalized because it's an acronym for Food, Art, Recreational activities, and Music. The goal of the fest is to see greater representation for diverse cultural traditions that center in these four categories. Though the event has been scaled back due to the pandemic this year, its organizers hope it will turn into a large annual festival in years to come.

The fest began when local leaders Kim Sin, Miguel Valdez Soto and Anantha "Andy" Kollengode had a conversation in 2019 centered on their desire for [creating healthier communities with holistic health measures](#).

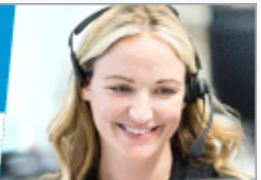
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"Being aware of the mental and physical needs of our communities, which includes preparing and eating fresh food which is native to their homeland, and seeing their culture represented in our communities," is a part of these health measures, said Amanda Nigon-Crowley, the garden coordinator for The Village and development coordinator for the Diversity Council.

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Khmer music, one-man-band style. There will also be an Indian dance group and a youth painting project led by a local artist to transform one of the garden's new compost stations. Infuzn Foods and other food trucks will sell refreshments, since the pandemic prevents individual gardeners from sharing their favorite dishes.

Related: [Civic Center welcomes Beatles and Stones](#)

Nigon-Crowley said The Village Community Gardens grow a wide array of food that many in Rochester are probably unfamiliar with. Some of the food, like cosmos flowers (which make a tasty addition to salads) are typically thought of as purely decorative by most Rochesterites.

Related: [4 acts. 6 hours. 30 minutes to paint. Med City Arts Festival, by the numbers.](#)

The FARM Flavor Fest is the perfect opportunity to learn firsthand about the cultures of the diverse growers represented at The Village Gardens, and all are welcome to attend.

If you go

What: FARM Flavor Fest**Where:** The Village Community Garden and Learning Center, 4950 31st Ave. NW, Rochester**When:** 4 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 19**Cost:** Free

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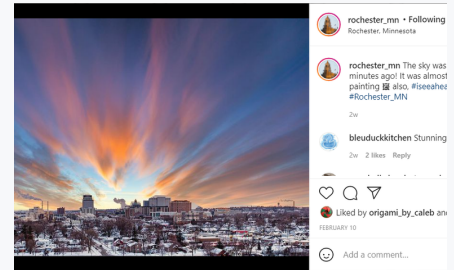
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