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**Contact:** Amy Weirick  
Office: (614) 848-8380  
Cell: (614) 296-8513  
[Amy@WeirickCommunications.com](mailto:Amy@WeirickCommunications.com)

**Editors Note: Photos are available by request or via email or through this [Dropbox link](#).**

## **“Taste of the Place” returns to Great Vacations Travel EXPO Food & Wine Restaurants Editor to share tips on experiencing destinations through food**

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Organizers of the Great Vacations Travel EXPO, presented by AAA, know culinary tourism – traveling with the intention of experiencing a place through its food – is among the hottest travel trends for 2019. A [report](#) from the World Tourism Organization notes the growth of food tourism is worldwide; in fact, it’s one of the most dynamic segments within the tourism market right now. Food tourists take part in the new trends of cultural consumption, seek authenticity and understand that food is a reflection of the people who eat it. This shared appetite for inspiring culinary experiences is behind the return of the wildly popular event *Taste of the Place*, taking place 12-7 p.m. on Feb. 8 at the EXPO.

This roving food tour will allow Travel EXPO attendees to indulge in samples of signature fare from exhibitor destinations while they browse regional travel offerings for expert travel advice. From red carpet-worthy Bourbon Balls, to famous ice cream cones and specialty dips, *Taste of the Place* will offer an added treat for those with a hunger for travel.

While guests sample dozens of culinary offerings, Food & Wine Digital Restaurant Editor Maria Yagoda will be on the AAA Travel Stage at 1 p.m., sharing insider tips on how to discover a place through its food. She will discuss some of her favorite food destinations and describe how to get off the beaten path and find food nirvana by unearthing hidden hole-in-the-wall joints that only the locals know.

Just a few of the *Taste of the Place* offerings include:

- Visit Norfolk, VA: local Pop Culture popcorn and famous Doumar’s cones --the world’s first ice cream cones
- West Ohio Adventures: Rosebud’s Ranch and Garden organic, homemade dips and fruit butters
- Cambridge/Guernsey County: Kennedy’s Bakery tea cookies
- Louisville Tourism: Bourbon Balls from the Louisville chocolatier that provides the chocolate desserts for the Emmy Awards
- Shipshewana/LaGrange County, IN: homemade Amish peanut butter and apple butter
- Velvet Ice Cream: fresh ice cream samples with local coffee
- And more

The Great Vacations Travel EXPO, presented by AAA, opens Friday, Feb. 8 and runs through Sunday, Feb. 10, at the Ohio Expo Center. Hours are Friday: Noon to 7 p.m.; Saturday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Sunday: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets are \$8 at the door or at any AAA Ohio Auto Club store. AAA members who show their AAA card receive 50 percent off admission. Children ages 16 and under are admitted at no charge. Additional event details are available at [AAAGreatVacations.com](http://AAAGreatVacations.com).

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**Images, video, special media access and interviews are available. Contact Amy Weirick,  
O: (614) 848-8380 M: (614) 296-8513 or [amy@WeirickCommunications.com](mailto:amy@WeirickCommunications.com).**