



A Few Tips for a Simple Life

by Michael Guilfoil, *The Spokesman-Review*

Organic farmer MaryJane Butters long ago embraced Thoreau's dictum to "simplify, simplify." As a Forest Service ranger in the 1970s, she spent two summers roaming Utah's Uinta Mountains with her home on her back. Later, she maintained the most remote wilderness ranger station in the Lower 48. Today, Butters and her family live eight miles outside Moscow, Idaho, on their farm, headquarters of her mail-order dry-foods business. But even e-commerce hasn't tempered Butters' enthusiasm for simplicity.

MaryJane's

2 Vermont Grand View Farm

Run away to an 18th century farmhouse on an idyllic hillside sheep farm in Washington, Vermont. This farm has beautiful views, quiet pastures, country roads, wildflowers, and a lovely covered porch that beckons relaxation. Grand View offers custom fiber retreats for individuals, families, or groups. Learn needle felting, braiding, spinning, fiber prep, natural dye techniques, the art of hand-painting yarn, and how to create felted murals. Three-day weaver retreats are offered from June–September. www.grandviewfarmvt.net

3 Hull-O Farms

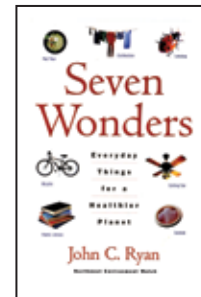
This family-friendly farm in Durham, New York, offers youngsters a unique hands-on farm "agventure." Families learn how to bottle-feed baby animals, milk cows and goats, gather eggs from the henhouse, pamper pigs, and even predict the weather. There's also time for fun stuff like cuddling kittens, fishing in the pond, hayrides, exploring the countryside, and roasting marshmallows over campfires. At summer's end, you can "get lost" in a corn maze and peruse the plentiful pumpkin patch. Hull-O Farms is open from May 15–October 31. www.hull-o.com

4 Flip Flop Ranch and Horse Rescue

Flip Flop Ranch is a family farm in Lucerne Valley, California, that is dedicated to the preservation of endangered livestock breeds and rescuing horses. This revolutionary ranch also offers a therapy program for veterans and victims of violence. "Working on a ranch with experienced therapists gives these people a new hope for the future," say the Flip Flop folks. Play with kitties, goats, sheep, horses, pigs, ducks, turkeys, chickens, geese, and cows; harvest fruit; work in the vineyard; make jam; or simply relax in the pool. www.flipflop ranch.com

SimpleSolutions

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In December 1999, a newspaper reporter from Washington called. He was writing a review of the book *Seven Wonders: Everyday Things for a Healthier Planet* by John C. Ryan. Michael Guilfoil of *The Spokesman-Review* newspaper asked me if I had my own "seven wonders." The story that ensued was headlined

"Simple Solutions." Here, then, is the continuation of that story.

Each issue of *MaryJanesFarm* will feature in detail new solutions, and will give you all the information you need to make them your own.

Solutions from previous issues are available in the magazine section of my website: www.maryjanesfarm.org/SimpleSolutions.



seven wonders

1 Ridge to Reef Farm

Looking for a tropical vacation with a twist? Try Ridge to Reef Farm, the only organic farm in the Virgin Islands. Set deep in the rainforest on the island of St. Croix, you'll find a unique Caribbean getaway. Ridge to Reef invites you to immerse yourself in an off-the-grid farm community, where you can get your hands dirty harvesting a bounty while staying in stilted cabanas. Learn about permaculture as you volunteer in the gardens, feed chickens, and raise rabbits. When you're ready to relax, lie back and enjoy the slow pace of living green, island style. www.visfi.org

2 V6 Ranch

Learn how they raise grass-fed beef on a working cattle ranch in Parkfield, California. V6 Ranch offers trail rides, cattle drives, and horse camping (you can even bring your own horse). Or hike 50 scenic miles of trails with maps and trail markers to show the way, photograph wildlife and over 200 varieties of wildflowers, and bird watch. All-inclusive packages offer upscale rustic-style lodging and pool, gourmet meals, wine tasting, massage, and more. v6ranch.com

3 Greer Farm

Near Daingerfield, Texas, you'll find a unique, working farm with a culinary twist. Greer Farm is located on an 11-acre bass- and catfish-filled lake under towering pine, oak, and pecan trees. The farm offers charming cabins, flower and vegetable gardens, nearby wineries and antiques shops ... AND Chef Eva's "Farm to Fork" cooking classes—from basics to gourmet, "all including laughter, questions, conversation, and eating." www.greerfarm.com

7 farms to visit

The urge is undeniable—you long to know how your food evolves from *la terre* to gourmet fare. Your hands hanker for harvesting. But how? Where there's a whim, there's a way. Begin your pastoral pursuit with a farm stay. Here are seven farms that will welcome you with open arms.

1 Second Wind Country Inn

Have your eggs and meet the chickens too! At Second Wind in Ashland, Wisconsin, you'll wake up in the morning to gather eggs from the henhouse. After a farm-fresh breakfast, you can help harness horses for wagon or sleigh rides, learn how to harvest hay, pick berries, or make apple cider. There are farm activities for every season. www.secondwindcountryinn.com