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# Gourmet Locavorism

Eating well at LCC BY DANTE ZUÑIGA-WEST

**W**hen was the last time you had a good three-course meal for \$10? Truck stops and strip clubs and Vegas don't count — we mean *good*, as in the food is top-notch. How about a good \$10 three-course meal cooked with ingredients from the local farms and ranches around you, from the free-range beef in your steak salad to the raspberries and the rhubarb? Most likely the answer is never. Change that. Lane Community College's Renaissance Room is where you can make it happen.

On the east end of the LCC Center Building, the Renn Room is located a few feet away from the Wandering Goat coffee joint on campus. This well-kept secret definitely gets points for ambiance; patrons may get the feeling they've stepped from the hustle and bustle of a utilitarian college food court into a legitimate atmosphere of fine dining. The lighting, the table spreads, the well-dressed hosts are all pretty highbrow. The prices, however, are not. The Renn Room's menu revolves around the in-season stock and produce of local farmers and ranches, so there is always something new, tasty and authentically Oregon on your plate.

Even more impressive is the fact that the Renn Room is a student-run operation. Everyone in the place is an active student in LCC's Culinary Arts and Hospitality program, from the cooks to the waiters to the hosts. Here's the thing, though: You can't tell. The program is as professional as its service. Two sections of students work eight-hour shifts, preparing everything from cranberry chutney to (free-range) bison Bolognese.

Student jobs at the Renn Room account for roughly 60 hours of required hands-on learning, the other 40 hours is spent on business aspects of the restaurant industry, as well as perfecting sanitary and safety standards. This hands-on experience comes at no expense to the eater; in fact, it may be a downright steal that food (and service) of this caliber comes at such a manageable price. But make sure to call in advance and make reservations; the Renn Room was full when I visited, and it stays packed throughout the school year. ■



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