

LOCAL LOVE

Only locally sourced ingredients make up the treats
at Springfield's **100 Mile Bakery**

BY MORGAN THEOPHIL

When searching for a tasty treat during these seemingly endless cold months, put on your scarf, brace the brisk air and head over to downtown Springfield's 100 Mile Bakery. The moment you walk in the door, you're sure to be charmed by the down-home, cozy space and delightfully overwhelmed with the smells coming from the kitchen.

Everything that comes out of the kitchen, which owner Leda Hermecz built herself, was grown within the surrounding 100 miles. The food is blissfully local, primarily organic and so delicious that people come from far and wide to try it.

"This is the perfect small place to have this business," Hermecz says. "I love the non-pretentious, cozy feel, and this area is more caring about local organic food than most of the country."

The menu has something for everyone, and the

employees make you feel at home from the moment you walk in. Moreover, the simple seating is snug, creating a cozy escape from the weather, and the unique local art lining the walls is perfect for admiring as you enjoy your food.

The blackberry barley bar is the bakery's most popular sweet treat — if it's not sold out for the day when you arrive, you won't want to pass it by. Made from local berries and topped with a shortbread crumble, it's not only beautifully constructed, but makes for a scrumptious delight available year-round.

Hermecz says that building caring, lasting relationships with customers, as well as those who grow the food they serve, matters greatly. "We operate very differently than most," she says. "We talk to the farmers and then design the menu based on what is growing and available, not the other way around."

The bakery's philosophy of staying local means the mouthwatering treats being served change throughout the

year, but whatever the goodness coming out of the kitchen, it is made and served with perfection. "I love timing food where it can be presented at its best," Hermecz says. "What's growing locally is what we'll have, and it's what we'll use."

The handmade savory goods are as warm and delicious as the sweet treats: Quiches, chicken and dumplings, soups and seasonal favorites are written up on a rustic windowpane menu so distinctively that you'll want to try them all.

To top it all off, the bakery offers locally roasted coffee and delightful teas to enjoy alongside the food. As I devoured my strawberry rhubarb bar, I enjoyed a cup of what Hermecz called "warm, local love" — organic Earl Grey tea with local lavender syrup that is perfect for warming your hands, and your heart, on a cold day. This bakery is sure to please. ■

100 Mile Bakery is open from 9 am to 5 pm Monday through Saturday at 418 A Street in Springfield. For more information visit 100milebakery.com.



ADDING HONEY TO PEARS FOR PEAR PIE



WINTER GREENS POTATO BAKE



HAZELNUT BERRY CRUMBLE POT
(EGG AND DAIRY FREE)

PHOTOS BY TODD COOPER