

The Green Notebook

Slow Down with Slow Food

You've heard of Fast Food for sure, but have you ever heard of Slow Food?

The Slow Food movement is gaining ground across the country and around the world. Started as a resistance against the globalization of fast food, the movement is based on the philosophy of consciously slowing down our fast-paced lives and living the slow life with food as the focus. It's about simply taking the time to slow down and enjoy life with family and friends.

It all started in the '80s when Carlo Petrini of Italy recognized that the industrialization of food was standardizing taste and leading to the extinction of thousands of food varieties and flavors. Slow Food was born and today Slow Food International is active in 100 countries with a worldwide membership of 80,000.

Slow Food USA is a part of this movement and is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to supporting and celebrating the food traditions of North America. Their website, www.slowfoodusa.org, explains that by "reviving the pleasures of the table, and using our taste buds as our guides, our food heritage can be saved." I like how the *New York Times Magazine* put it: "The Slow Food Movement (is) a defiant determination to preserve unprocessed, time-intensive food from being wiped off the culinary map." This philosophy all ties into the green call to eat local and consider organics.

Sounds great, doesn't it? This movement makes me stop and think. *Are* we in too much of a hurry when it comes to food and nutrition? We are sure privileged to live in a rural area where treasures of the soil abound: delicious sweet corn, tasty tomatoes, zesty zucchini.... I've really been making an effort to visit our local Farmer's Markets more and my Kroger less (no offense)...There's just something about a meal full of our local harvest that is very satisfying.

If this idea of "slow food" sounds interesting, you can learn more or even become a member at the Slow Food USA website or by checking out books on the topic like *The Pleasures of Slow Food*, *Slow Food Collected Thoughts on Taste, Tradition and the Honest Pleasures of Food*, or *Slow Food Nation: Why Our Food Should be Good, Clean and Fair*.

Slow Food asks us to involve the entire family in preparing our food and to try and take the time to linger over meals. I remember a European acquaintance who once expressed such horror at the idea of actually eating on the run (eating in the car after going through a drive-through). That thought has stuck with me...I know we all do it, but maybe we can consciously make an effort to slow down from time to time. Let's stop and smell the garlic!

Tuesday Trippier lives in Delaware, is a writer and mother of three, who enjoys learning more about green living.