

FORAGE SAN FRANCISCO/OAKLAND

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Forage Oakland/ San Francisco addresses how we eat everyday, and how everyone can benefit from viewing their neighborhood as a veritable edible map. The gleaning of unharvested food; the meeting of new neighbors; the joy of the season's first plum (straight from your neighbor's backyard, no less); the gathering and redistribution of produce that would otherwise be wasted can be powerful. Imagine gathering several friends for morning, midday, evening or weekend edible plant identification bicycle rides through your San Francisco, Oakland or Berkeley neighborhood.

Consider the very local impact of growing your own food—bartering for our everyday food needs—and what that does for your community. Consider what might happen when you take the large, sterile grocery store out of the equation. The sheer amount of fruits, vegetables, and herbs that can be cultivated in the Berkeley, Oakland and San Francisco landscape is significant. Neighborhoods are also understood better by paying attention to what is cultivated there and why. The Temescal neighborhood of Oakland was historically settled by Italian immigrants and is now home to a plethora of citrus trees and rosemary.

The need to eat binds all of us. The grocery store should be only one option for acquiring the food we need to meet our nutritional needs. There is also the community garden, where people can share space and grow produce for themselves or their families. There also exists the farmers' market as well as the restaurant. I would like to help popularize another option, and that is the barter, which in many places in the world is given more consideration. The barter can translate to other areas of urban living, and can create a community of people who would rather do it for themselves and play an active role in their consumerism. When there are plums in your neighbor's backyard, enjoy them with your neighbor.

