

## Melissa Harrison '98, Owner and Executive Chef, Seasonal Montana

The menu for Seasonal Montana follows the seasonal bounty of beautiful southwestern Montana, a philosophy Melissa Harrison has adopted for her career and lifestyle. During the spring and summer, she lives in Bozeman, taking the "pop-up restaurant" trend to new splendor as Seasonal Montana patrons dine in different fields and on farms in Big Sky country. In the fall and winter, Melissa travels to Chile to serve as chef at Patagonia's Martin Pescador Lodge.

A Maryland farm girl, she is used to eggs straight from the chicken and carrots plucked from the garden. "The idea of 'good food, good life' was a big part of my childhood," says Melissa, who graduated from The Baltimore International College Culinary program. "I've always loved the farm-to-table concept." After culinary school, she moved to Boulder to help open a restaurant and in 2008, was on Season Five of Bravo's "Top Chef." "It was a crazy experience," she recalls. "I was in New York for the taping and couldn't tell anybody but my family." Being under the camera lens was challenging, but Melissa embraced it. "I pushed myself to all extremes. The show tears you down then builds you back up, but I was there to cook and not fuel the drama [of the show]. I cooked for my heroes and chefs whom I look up to."

The experience also served as a wake-up call. "After the show, I returned to Boulder and felt that I was doing everything I should be doing and not what I wanted to do," she admits. "I wanted to travel, find myself again as a chef and have my business match my lifestyle." She saw a job listing in Chile and applied. "Everything there is farm to table, which inspired my business model for Seasonal Montana. I am trying to reinvent how people eat and appreciate food and where it comes from. There are a lot of hothouses in Montana, so I can get food out of season, but I am trying to stick to how food is meant to be, to its pureness." She had no idea while at Garrison Forest that she would become a chef and entrepreneur, but the GFS philosophy prepared her for the path she's taken: "Garrison Forest pushed me to be the best person I can be and to be original."



Visit [seasonalmontana.com](http://seasonalmontana.com) for Melissa's blog, and go to [gfs.org/magazine](http://gfs.org/magazine) for her zucchini carpaccio recipe.

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## Inessa "Inna" Lurye '02, Vice President for Product Strategy, Farmigo

Inna Lurye doesn't sugar-coat it: "Our food system is broken in many, many ways." First, it travels a long way to get to warehouses, where it remains for a long time. She explains that 30 to 40 percent of perishable food is wasted before getting to the customer, and a large portion of the money spent on food goes to the retailers, not the producers. "Farmigo works to disrupt and fix the system and help consumers eat better in the process," Inna says.

Initially, Farmigo was founded to assist farmers in selling directly to consumers through a Web store and back-end operations support. The start-up raised more capital in 2012 and expanded its reach to serve the consumer market, which is Inna's focus. She is building

what she calls a CSA 2.0, the next iteration of community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs. The Farmigo model has local producers delivering produce to sites organized through community organizers, "a farmers' market on someone's front porch," Inna explains. "People buy online then pick up their customized orders at a designated site."

Before becoming a full-time Farmigo employee in summer 2013, Inna had been a Farmigo intern as a student and post-grad of the Harvard Business School/Harvard Kennedy School of Government joint M.A. in Public Policy and Business Administration program. For a permanent position, she was looking for a problem, not specifically a food company. "I am interested in creating systems that are solving large-scale problems and designed around top-down human behavior," she says of her expertise honed in two high-powered mayoral offices. For two years, she was senior advisor to former D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty and worked on environmental issues for former N.Y.C. Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Her time with Mayor Fenty underscores just how powerful a Garrison Forest education can be: "During my first two weeks, I had daily meetings with him and would really push back. It didn't faze me that he was the mayor or to not speak my mind."

Farmigo, though, is different from her past experiences. "With a start-up, there's no model, so the highs are higher and the lows are lower," she says. "We're building the path as we walk it and have to be comfortable with ambiguity." Inna is more than comfortable with change and hopes that Farmigo inspires the same in others. "The reason someone starts a Farmigo pickup site is that they want to help change the food system," she explains of the nearly 100 Farmigo delivery sites now in New York and San Francisco serving more than 3,000 consumers. "Soon there are 20, 30 or more people in a neighborhood shopping fresh, eating local and eating better. The more directly you shop from the person who makes or harvests the food, the better."



For more, visit [Farmigo.com](http://Farmigo.com).

