

May 20, 2009

FAVORITE THINGS

Top Farmers Markets

BY LINDA BARR O'FLANAGAN

It's unanimous. When it comes to New York Farmers Markets, there's none better than Union Square.

Our search this week for the favorite brought a deluge of responses from fans of the city institution.

Barak Realty's Greg Bibens said the Farmer's Market in Union Square definitely gets his vote. "I have a setback terrace and love gardening, so buying fresh herbs and flowers to plant in the spring is wonderful!"

Elaine Linet from **Citi Habitats** is a big fan of Paffenroth Gardens produce. They're a regular at the Union Square market. She said, "Wonderful quality at fair prices, sweetest and longest-keeping corn in the market, Sycamore Farms (also at Union Square) has positively succulent tomatoes."

"Union Square — where else?" said **Century 21 NY Metro's Frances Rickard**. "Besides the wonderful plants, fruits, veggies, bakery goodies, the great neighborhood with Union Square Café, the Coffee Shop, ABC Carpet & Home, Trader Joe's, Filene's, Diesel, makes it a destination for an entire day trip."

Citi Habitats' Julie Zhang said, "Without a doubt, Union Square is the best. Though the 23rd Street station is closer to my Gramercy office, I purposely get off at Union Square so I can pass through the Farmer's Market to look for some goodies. Whether it's for the cookies, homemade preserves, fresh apple cider or floral arrangements for home, I love it all!"

"Personally, I like to support small, local businesses and have much respect for them. Given the economy, I would be sad if my local shops closed down."

Kris Sylvester from **CitiHabitats**

goes there for the apple cider donuts, all year long.

Jeffrey Carlson, executive vice president of leasing at **Platinum Properties**, told us, "The farmers market that's coming to South Street Seaport is great because they'll be setting up their stands in the old fish stalls on South Street, which is sure to bring back that old New York feeling."

"You can get anything from cheese to fresh fruits and veggies. The only downfall is that they're only open on Fridays and Saturdays."

Amy Casey of **Barak** admits she does like Union Square, but added, "The most convenient for me is a small one on 9th Ave between 56th and 57th streets on the weekends. It's full of the freshest products and great prices. I love to cook, and living only a few blocks away is like having a garden in my backyard!"

"I tend to go with what looks the best at the moment, and create a dish around that item, but it's best to have a full range of color on the plate; not only does it look fantastic, but it is a sure fire way know you're receiving a wide-variety of nutrients."

Barak's Wendy Frank hits up the same market. "It's right across the street from my apartment. It is great because it is small and caters to the locals, no tourists. The best things are the amazing home baked pies. The apple/blueberry combo is to die for and the apple/cranberry is amazing, too. Don't tell too many people, we like to keep it a secret."

Maria Patricia Slee of **Ideal Properties Group** loves the Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn for the Tello Farms eggs, local corn and watermelon

in season. "And the mussels from Blue Moon Fish — so delicious steamed for a great (and cheap) lunch, with a buttered baguette and a glass of wine."

Gabriela Turnauer of **Century 21 NY Metro** heads for Union Square for the fresh, organic food. "It also makes me feel good to know that I am doing my part to support these great people that dedicate their life to bringing us city slickers natural, healthy products," she said.

But Gabriela also has a soft spot for Chinatown. "For a market with a great variety of produce and spices, I would have to go with Chinatown. I could go there everyday and still find a spice or herb I have never seen before."

Argo Residential's Jodi Nath said her favorite farmers market is the one in Amagansett. "My husband and I used to go every weekend (before my daughter was born) and just relax in the Hamptons. We would have breakfast at the Farmer's Market and then head to Hither Hills State park to hang in the sun."

Leigh Zaph of **Manhattan Homes** sums it up. "Not to be neighborhood-centric, but please, the Union Square Farmers Market is clearly one of the best. From deliciously brown Ginger-Cranberry-Walnut scones to amber Vermont maple syrup to white asparagus and edible flowers, the selection is culinarily comprehensive. Everything comes in fresh from the hills and valleys of upstate New York, New Jersey, Long Island, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Massachusetts, too."

"And hey, if you're ever skeptical about how it's all done, you and your family may get an invite to visit the farms and see where all the magic happens."



JEFFREY CARLSON

JODI NATH

WENDY FRANK

Top to bottom: GABRIELA TURNAUER, GREG BIBENS AND AMY CASEY