TOURS
Chile Pepper Institute - International organization dedicated to research and education offers tours about the history, production, uses, and nutritional value of chile peppers. (Available anytime but most colorful during late summer and fall)
Culinary Walking Tour of Mesilla - Spend a couple hours with chef and cookbook author Kelley Coffeen, touring Mesilla and stopping into local eateries for samples.
La Semilla Food Center - Regional organization planting the seeds of healthier, self-reliant, fair and more sustainable food system.
Mountain View Market Co-op Farm - Organic vegetable farm on 38 acres offering community supported agriculture and working with a network of chemical-free farmers and ranchers.

MARKETS
Farmers and Crafts Market - Voted #1 in the U.S. in 2012, Downtown Main Street, Wednesdays and Saturdays. (Year-round)
Growers’ Market - Mountain View Market every Sunday brings fresh, local produce from the growers’ hands to yours. (Spring through fall)
Lyles Family Farms - U-Pick Gardens. (Wednesdays and weekends from Labor Day thru Halloween)

CLASSES
Tacos 101 - Learn about the history of maíz and how it became a staple in Mexican food while assembling a taco feast at the Casa Camino Real Cultural Center.
Salsa Tasting - Learn to identify types of chile peppers and what gives them their individual taste and smell.
Wine & Chile Pairing - Complement local wines with a variety of chile peppers presented in the form of sauces and salsas.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ANNUAL FESTIVALS
Blessing of the Field - A celebration of New Mexico’s 3,000 year farming history at the Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum. (Every May)
Hatch Chile Festival - Food, crafts and live music at harvest time in the chile capital of the world. (Every September)
The Whole Enchilada Fiesta - A weekend of fun surrounding the world’s largest flat enchilada. (Every September)
Lyles Family Farms - Mesilla Valley Corn Maze and pumpkin patch. (Weekends from the end of September to the end of October)
NMSU inks hot deal on world’s spiciest pepper

NEW MEXICO BUSINESS WEEKLY

The Chile Pepper Institute at New Mexico State University has partnered with a private company to create a hot sauce with the world’s hottest chile pepper.

It’s the first time the Institute has joined with a private firm to produce a product. The Holy Jolokia sauce is produced by CaJohns Fiery Foods, based in Columbus, Ohio, and is made from the Bhut Jolokia pepper, which the Institute and the Guinness Book of Records certify is the hottest pepper on the planet.

Paul Bosland, director of the Chile Pepper Institute, said the new product will help further cement New Mexico as the chile capital of the world.

The Bhut Jolokia chiles are grown in India and their reputation has boosted production in that country by more than 25 percent, according to NMSU officials.

The pepper has more than one million Scoville Heat Units, which makes it nearly twice as hot as the Red Savina, the pepper which once held the hottest crown.

New Mexico green chile contains about 1,500 Scoville Heat Units. An average jalapeño has about 10,000.

The 5-ounce bottles of Holy Jolokia retail for $10 and a portion of the sales will help fund research and education at the Chile Pepper Institute. The Institute is the only organization devoted to education, research and archiving information on chile peppers. Plans are in the works to raise $10 million for an endowed chair in the institute and establish a new facility with a tourist venue that will include accommodations for conferences and teaching, and a demonstration garden and greenhouse.
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Double Eagle Announces World’s Largest Green Chile Cheeseburger

Mesilla – Effective July 1, 2009, the Double Eagle restaurant will add the world’s largest green chile cheeseburger to the Peppers Café menu. Peppers Café operates inside the Double Eagle and offers a casual atmosphere with a menu dedicated to New Mexican cuisine. The traditional New Mexican specialty will be built on a specially baked yeast roll bun toasted with garlic-infused mayonnaise and topped by a seasoned and grilled one pound patty of hand-ground beef from the only dedicated Beef Ageing Room in the state.

Three roasted green chilies and a half pound of shredded creamy white Monterey Jack and sharp yellow Cheddar cheeses will drape the huge burger. A sprinkling of the restaurant’s Pico De Gallo (chopped onion, tomato and jalapenos) over the cheese will add color and sharpness to the flavors. Crisp iceberg lettuce, slices of tomato and New Mexico Sweet onion plus a dill pickle slice will join the large platter for service to the customers.

Application has been made to the Guinness Book of World Records as the largest commercially available green chile cheeseburger. Jerry Harrell, restaurant manager, eagerly awaits word from the group. “We were reviewing all our menu items and we came to the green chile cheeseburger. Mr. Ritter, our owner, said that he could see no way to make it better so why not make it bigger.” said Harrell.

Customer reaction to test burgers has been overwhelmingly positive said Executive Chef Lauro Campos. In developing the right balance of seasoning, over 20 guests were surprised with the huge burger and were closely questioned regarding their opinions and feelings. This research revealed that splitting the burger with up to four people worked well but further splits caused jealousy and sometimes open animosity between test subjects. “The split with 6 people caused the most problems. The burger was so tasty that the rules we learned in kindergarten about sharing went out the window. We had to serve a couple of our regular half pound green chile cheeseburgers to satisfy everyone. They wanted those burgers!” noted Campos.

The world’s largest green chile cheeseburger joins the restaurant’s famous Turquoise Margarita as a specialty of the house. The Turquoise Margarita offers select anejo Tequila and is garnished with a genuine New Mexican turquoise stone.

For further information: Jerry Harrell (575) 523-6700 crucesjerry@msn.com
The Changing Tastes of Las Cruces

As you wander through the streets of Las Cruces, you may just catch a whiff of some bold Thai spices, or the wholesome smell of Sheppard’s pie, and maybe even the aromatic scent of roasting Hawaiian pork, as more and more exotic restaurants spring up in Las Cruces and have started to serve tasty treats from around the globe.

With the opening of a traditional Irish pub, a Teppanyaki grill, a traditional Italian pizzeria, a Hawaiian, Indian and Thai restaurants in the past four years alone, Las Cruces’ Mexican food may have to share the “culinary spotlight” in a city that is rapidly becoming a “culinary adventure” for locals and tourists alike.

“It’s a very distinct taste...I get most of my ingredients from Hawaii,” said Rachel Faulkner, chef and owner of the Hawaiian restaurant Ono Grindz, who said she cooks for, “the local people from Hawaii,” because, “they really miss the food.”

Las Cruces currently has the only Hawaiian food restaurant in the state, which has been open for approximately two years now, and Faulkner explained she gets many customers from the east coast, as well as neighboring communities, people who are looking for some bold exotic flavors in addition to those “South of the border” flavors for which Las Cruces is renowned.

“I think it’s a sign of culture and that the people of Las Cruces are willing to try new things and support new enterprises,” said Rebecca Correa-Elliott, a longtime resident of Las Cruces, while explaining that the city’s restaurant scene in has changed over the years and the community has continued to embrace those changes.

Although the overwhelming majority of restaurants in Las Cruces still serve Mexican and New Mexican flavors, there are now more than 20 restaurants serving exotic cuisine to the city’s residents and its visitors.

The diversity of restaurants has continued to attract many customers from neighboring communities like El Paso, often bringing soldiers from Ft. Bliss who have developed tastes while traveling in other countries.

As the number of restaurants serving exotic flavors continues to grow, Las Cruces is growing from its longtime position as a culinary hotspot to a tour of flavors that takes your taste buds around the globe.

A list of restaurants and information about restaurants in Las Cruces can be found in the dining/nightlife section of VisitLasCruces.com