

Why I live here



Angela Shen at Pike Place Fish

Blazing a gourmet trail

Savor Seattle founder *Angela Shen* fell in love with the city's food culture—enough to launch her own culinary tours

OUR MOVE OUT WEST happened almost overnight. My husband and I were on our honeymoon, and I said, "It's time for a change for me. I'm done with the corporate world; I want to strike out on my own." My husband agreed—he wanted to get back to his tech roots. Two weeks later, we were visiting Seattle, seeing if we could spend the rest of our lives here.

When we first moved from Chicago in 2006, we were living two blocks from Pike Place Market. The calmness of the market in the morning was like a slumbering giant about to wake up. One day I was buying herbs and the woman at the stall said, "What can I get for you, my dear?" No one calls me that but my mom. I bought a postcard and wrote to her, saying, "This is where it's going to begin."

Growing up in the Midwest, I thought words like "natural" and "organic" were a distant, expensive way to think about food. In Seattle, I saw yard signs saying not VOTE FOR SO-AND-SO but

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL MARKET: BUY LOCAL! It changed my views on eating.

I started Savor Seattle because, as a newcomer, I'd wished there were an inexpensive way to get a taste of the great restaurants here. I thought, That's a business idea. I became a stalker at Pike Place Market, doing research. People thought I was part of the local color.

I had no work connections, so I called up the owner of the first restaurant I loved here—Mashiko in West Seattle. He introduced me to one of his friends, the chef at Sazerac, Jason McClure. I ended up using the PR firm he recommended. People were so willing to lend a hand to someone they didn't know—it was incredible.

I have always thought of the West as the promised land. And the best part of the tours is that I get to share my discoveries—the mom-and-pop winery, the artisanal cheesemaker—with others.

—AS TOLD TO ANNA NORDBERG

INFO Savor Seattle offers culinary tours in Pike Place Market and downtown Seattle, as well as its new Coffee Bites and Sights tour. From \$41; savorseattle.com or 888/987-2867.