

# *edible*

LONG ISLAND

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## Looking for Farm-to-Table Cuisine on Long Island? There's an App for That

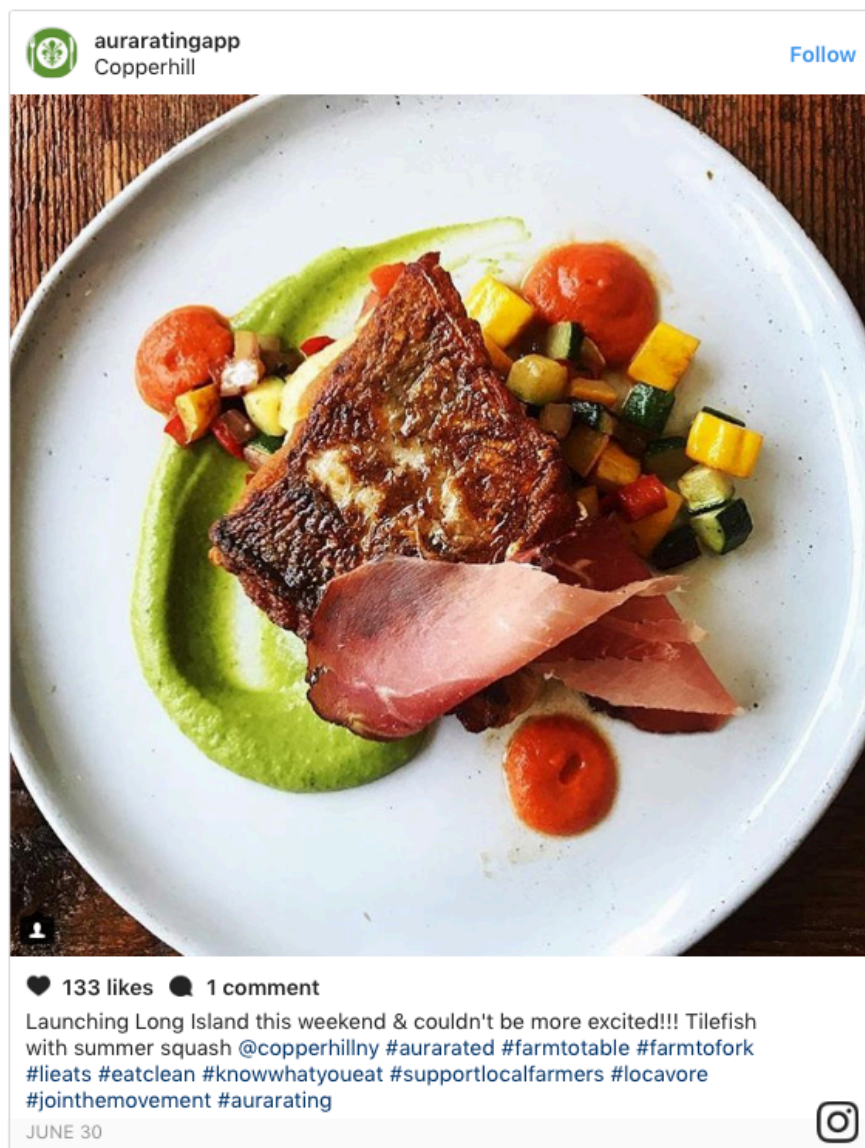
Knowing your farmer is now easier than ever.



More than 100 Long Island restaurants are featured on the Aura Rating app, including Tutto il Giorno (whose gorgeous salad is featured above).

Finding restaurants on Long Island who source locally has never been so easy now that [Aura Rating](#) has hit the Internet. The Aura Rating app first came on the scene in September of 2015, when it featured New York City restaurants along with the five boroughs. It was the brainchild of foodie and entrepreneur Kristin Zecher. The success of her venture led her to launch a Long Island Aura Rating in July 2017, with many Long Island restaurants participating.

Zecher, who grew up on Long Island, was born and raised in the restaurant industry, within which her father had owned several restaurants. While attending the University of Hartford, Kristin began studying the whole food market, and became passionate about food and where it comes from. This passion led her to study abroad in Florence, Italy where she fell in love with the culture and, of course, the food. Her time there inspired her. When she came back to New York she started working at [Eataly](#), located in downtown Manhattan. She loved the concept, and soon came up with an idea to start an indoor farmers market on a grand scale, where farmers and producers would be at one set location year round. While still in school, she had worked on a business plan, and actually won a business plan competition. After graduating in 2013 she set out to execute it, and started looking for vacant spaces in Brooklyn.



“At the same time that I was working on finding a place for the farmers market, I was living in Manhattan and obviously dining out a lot,” said Zecher. “When I did cook at home in my apartment, I was buying from the local farmers, and local farmers markets, and I was buying organic. But then when I was dining out, I had no idea what I was actually eating. That’s when I came up with the concept of the app. I wanted to know which restaurants were sourced locally so I could make an informed decision when I dined out.”

Kristin decided to start off small and envisioned an app where there would be a base, a following and a brand – a farm-to-table movement, which she believes will ultimately bring her back to that indoor farmers market concept.

She started off by partnering with Grow NYC, an organization which runs thirty-five farmers markets throughout the five boroughs. They tell Kristin which restaurants are buying from their farmers markets. She also does events with them, where a chef from one of the restaurants will do a cooking demonstration with ingredients they get from the farmers market. Consumers get free samples plus the recipe. Besides Grow NYC, she is also working with Slow Food NYC and Farm to Table Logistics. Both organizations keep Kristin abreast of the restaurants they are delivering to. Through these organizations, Kristin has developed wonderful relationships with farmers, producers, chefs and restaurant owners.





If a restaurant is no longer buying from a farmer, or if a restaurant closes, the farmers and producers will let Kristin know. This is how the app stays up-to-date.

The Aura Rating app is a free service for restaurants, and is free for consumers as well. The items purchased by restaurants are not just limited to fruits and vegetables. Items that can get them on the Aura Rating also include local honey, local wines and beer, cheese, meats, breads, everything and anything that they are buying for their menu that's local.

Aura Rating app is beneficial to consumers because they now have a resource to find out which restaurants source locally. As for the participating restaurants, according to Kristin, "they are super excited and on board."



“The more consumers want this,” said Zecher, “the more restaurants are going to source local. The more restaurants that source local, the more we support our local farmers. So it’s helping the consumer, the restaurant and the farmer. It makes it come full circle.”

Zecher’s website—[Aura Rating](#)—helps to further educate the public on GMO foods, processed foods and what’s actually happening with our food system and why people need to care about it.

A few years ago, it was mainly East End Long Island restaurants who were sourcing locally. Now restaurants from the East End all the way through Nassau County are priding themselves on using fresh, local products. Kristin has found this to be very exciting, and she wanted to capitalize on it. She began setting up a data base of Long Island restaurants as she came across them, and now she is happy to share this list with consumers.



Instagram has been great way for Kristin to develop a rapport with restaurant-goers. Some users direct message her and give her their feedback. Many of them have said this needs to go nationwide, and one woman in particular has requested to have Aura Rating in Los Angeles.

Participating Long Island restaurants include Osteria Leana in Oyster Bay, Kerber's Farm in Huntington, Sandbar in Cold Spring Harbor, Verde in Deer Park, Dopo La Siaggia in Sag Harbor, Wölffer Kitchen in Sag Harbor, Marie Eiffel Market on Shelter Island, Tutto il Giorno in Southampton, Jema in Huntington, Babalu in Huntington, LeVin in Lake Grove, Spuntino Wine Bar and Italian Tapas in Garden City, View in Oakdale, Curds and Whey in Locust Valley, Duryea's Lobster Deck in Montauk, Jedediah Hawkins in Riverhead, and over 100 more.