



BIG TABLE DINNERS 2017 FAQs SHEET

WHAT ARE BIG TABLE DINNERS?

As a part of Night Out in the Parks (NOITP), the Chicago Park District (CPD) has partnered with the Green City Market's (GCM) Junior Board to host a series of Big Table Dinners (BTD). These dinners highlight local food growers and bring neighbors together to share a meal in the park.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE BIG TABLE DINNERS?

Big Table Dinners are designed to bring together farmers, producers, chefs, agricultural activists, community leaders, local business owners, food lovers, neighbors, and more to share a meal. In the past, the meal has been served family-style in two to three courses at one large table. Guests will enjoy small bites and rotate through a number of tables, participating in conversations and informal presentations hosted by select local community members.

ARE YOU PARTNERING WITH ANY LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS?

We are partnering with local groups that have a food focus—from community gardening to culinary programs. This is an expansion of NOITP programming, which currently has a large arts focus. We think it is very exciting to expand that programming to celebrate urban agriculture and honor local food leaders by sharing a community meal.

WHAT FORM OF SUPPORT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR FROM COMMUNITY GROUPS?

As much as community groups would like to provide! We would love for you and your group to attend the dinner. If you have suggestions regarding local chefs or are in contact with local food organizations and relevant community groups, we would appreciate your input. Volunteers are also needed at the dinners.

WHO IS ABLE TO ATTEND? WHAT IS THE TICKET COST AND TICKETING PROCESS?

BTDs are free, but ticketed. A group of seats are available to the public on a first-come, first-served basis through the Night Out in the Parks website. Additional tickets will be distributed through the park supervisor, advisory board, Green City Market boards, and the local community groups we are partnering with to those active in urban agriculture and residents of the neighborhoods surrounding each park. We will work closely with each group to determine the number of tickets allocated to each group that is represented.

WHERE DO THE PROCEEDS GO?

There are no proceeds. The BTDs are funded in partnership by the CPD and the GCM.



HOW WILL THE TABLE BE SET UP? IS IT LITERALLY ONE BIG TABLE?

It is several large tables to accommodate the increased attendance over the years. We will host 120 guests at five Big Tables.

ARE ANY LOCAL CHEFS OR RESTAURANTS PARTICIPATING?

Our goal is to have two to three chefs who either live in the neighborhood or own a restaurant in the neighborhood at each BTM. We have number of chefs who serve on the GCM Junior Board who will help lead the team of local chefs and coordinate produce needs for each BTM.

IS ANY OF THE FOOD COMING FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GARDENS?

Procuring local food is a large part of the meal planning process. Our goal is to work with our local food groups' contacts to procure as much food as possible from them. The rest of the food will be procured from local farmers that vend at GCM and are local to the Midwest.

WHAT IS THE MENU THEME?

The chefs will work with what is available and in season as fresh, locally grown produce is the star of the event. The meal will be served tapas style in a series of courses.

WHERE WILL COOKING TAKE PLACE? WILL THERE BE ANY PROPANE OR CHARCOAL GRILLING?

Most of the food will be prepped in the chefs' respective kitchens. We may use charcoal grills on-site.

WHO WILL BE SERVING THE FOOD?

GCM Junior Board members and volunteers will serve the meals. We also try to partner with local culinary programs when possible so teens have the opportunity to work with local chefs and gain serving experience.

WILL ALCOHOL BE SERVED? OTHER BEVERAGES?

No alcohol will be served. Tea and/or water will be offered.

WHAT IS THE START AND END TIME OF THE EVENT?

5:30-7:30pm

WHEN WILL SET-UP BEGIN?

This will vary by location, but generally up to four hours before the event.

WILL THERE BE ANY LOGOS OR SIGNAGE? WHOSE AND WHERE?

There is not an independent logo for the BTM events. The official logos for the CPD, NOITP, and GCM will appear on all printed materials.



IS MEDIA INVITED? WILL THERE BE PRESS PRIOR TO THE EVENTS?

All media must go through the CPD, as all media for NOITP goes through their office. There will be limited press prior to the event as we have a limited amount of space for the dinners and we would like each community group to be able to bring their constituents to the event. A press release will be created after each dinner by the CPD. We will have a photographer at each event to capture the highlights of the evening.

IS THERE A RECYCLING PLAN?

We would like to minimize waste by using reusable plates, utensils, etc. If that is not feasible, we will absolutely have a recycling and compost plan in place.

IS THIS AN ALL AGES EVENT?

Yes.

WHAT IS THE RAIN PLAN? IS THE EVENT RAIN OR SHINE?

Yes, BTDs are rain or shine. We have a sheltered alternative at each CPD to set up the dinner if the weather does not cooperate.

WILL THERE BE ENTERTAINMENT/MUSIC/SPEAKING/TOASTS?

There is no formal entertainment or speech scheduled. 5-7 local groups will be selected to lead at table discussions at the events and are encouraged engage with the other attendees and talk about what they do in the food and agriculture community.

WHAT IS THE 2017 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS?

WASHINGTON PARK
SUNDAY, JULY 9th
5:30-7:30PM

JULIA DEBURGOS PARK
SUNDAY, AUGUST 6th
5:30-7:30PM

KILBOURNE PARK
SUNDAY, AUGUST 27th
5:30-7:30pm

GARFIELD PARK
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10
5:30-7:30PM