



As the lingering warmth of summer starts to fade, the cooler mornings and golden leaves signal the arrival of autumn in Selwyn. Enjoy the bounty of the land at the Harvest Festival, browse local markets for fresh produce and cosy new seasonal finds, or explore Selwyn's rich heritage and vibrant arts scene. Whether you're admiring colourful autumn landscapes, harvesting vegetables for winter, or embracing the last of the outdoor festivals, there's something for everyone to enjoy this season.

SELWYN'S AGRICULTURAL LEGACY

Selwyn's rich farming history dates back over 300 years, with Maori cultivating the whenua and fishing the rivers and estuaries, particularly at Taumutu. Their deep connection to nature and sustainable practices laid the foundation for many of the agricultural traditions that continue today.

In the mid-1800s, European settlers arrived, driven by a desire to farm. Under government policies of the time, large swathes of the Canterbury Plains were divided into farmland, dramatically transforming the landscape. What was once endless tussock soon became a patchwork of productive farms, producing wheat, barley, wool, meat, and seeds. The fertile Canterbury Plains quickly earned a reputation as New Zealand's breadbasket.

These early farmers introduced innovative techniques that turned the region into a thriving agricultural hub, contributing significantly to both domestic and international food production.

Today, Waikirikiriri Selwyn continues this legacy, standing as one of New Zealand's major exporters of seeds and a leader in sustainable farming innovation. A blend of modern technology and time-honoured traditions ensures that respect for the land and hard work endure.

This Autumn, the Harvest Festival, Saturday 29 March in Rolleston Town Centre will celebrate Selwyn's rich agricultural footprint in New Zealand. Join us in honouring the traditions, achievements, and ongoing evolution of this fertile land. Experience the best of local produce, meet the farmers shaping the future, and enjoy a true taste of Selwyn's agricultural heritage.



LAUREN'S CREATIVE JOURNEY: A FUSION OF FOOD AND ART

For Lauren Carmichael of West Melton's Langdale Vineyard Restaurant, the link between food and art is inseparable – two expressions of creativity that blend colours, textures, and emotions.

Lauren's culinary story began on her family's North Canterbury farm, where she grew up surrounded by her grandfather's abundant vegetable garden, her mother's home preserving, and her grandmother's baking days that filled the pantry, instilling in Lauren a love of flavours and colours.

After university, Lauren headed off on a 17-year OE, living and working in the UK, Greece and Israel. Lauren was introduced to the complexities of French wines as well as the freshness and vibrancy of Mediterranean flavours. In Israel, Lauren ran her own wedding catering business for 11 years.

Returning home to Selwyn, Lauren jumped at the opportunity to take over the lease at Langdales Restaurant, building the flourishing wedding and conference business that it is today. Lauren's eye for colour and style translates into a wonderful dining experience for her guests. Each dish is visually enticing as well as delicious.

Lauren was introduced to art after being "dragged along" to a class by her friend and neighbour. At first, Lauren was skeptical about her artistic abilities, however this gave way and became a passion for painting. Now 7 years on, Lauren is a key figure in Selwyn's vibrant art scene, she is co-chair of Te Huanui Art Gallery in Darfield and regularly exhibits her artwork.

Lauren embraces the connection between food and art. Whether layering paint on a canvas or plating a beautifully balanced dish, there is always a story – one of flavour, colour, and the joy of creating something truly memorable.

Visit Langdale Restaurant:

- Open Sundays for lunch, featuring a seasonal menu.

Upcoming Exhibition:

- The Grid at Te Huanui Art Gallery, Darfield.

FAMILY DAY OUT – LINCOLN, TAI TAPU AND LEESTON

Take time out with family and friends to explore some of Selwyn's most charming towns. From delicious food to art, nature walks, alpacas, and even vineyards, there's something for everyone.

Morning in Lincoln

Start your day with breakfast at **The Cottage Café**, a cosy, historic spot perfect for families. Afterwards, visit **Down by the Liffey Gallery**, to see beautiful local art, followed by a stroll along the **Liffey Stream**, to feed the ducks and see other birdlife.

Midday in Tai Tapu

Head to **Bee My Honey** to taste local honey and meet the friendly alpacas. Visit **Cross Hares Vineyard** and **Summerhill Heights Vineyard** to sample local wines while the kids play on the lawns. Browse gifts at **The Store**, visit the historic **Tai Tapu Public Library**, and enjoy a coffee at **The General Post Café**.

Afternoon in Leeston

Take a countryside drive to Leeston for a wander through town and enjoy a coffee at **Suburban Eatery**. Stretch your legs along **Harts Creek Walking Track** before stopping at **Coes Ford Reserve** for a quick nature walk or dip.

Evening back in Lincoln

Dinner at **The Laboratory** in Lincoln, where you can wrap up your adventure with a delicious wood-fired pizza and craft beer, a local favourite.



EVENTS

Malvern A&P Show – 22 March

Leeston Fete – 22 March

South Island Field Days – 26 to 28 March

Harvest Festival – 29 March

West Melton Country Fete – 30 March

Christchurch Food Show – 4 to 6 April

Gluten-Free Food Festival – 9 to 10 May

Hororata Night Glow Festival – 10 May



LAUREN CARMICHAEL'S YEMENITE BEAN SOUP

This warming autumn white bean soup is infused with hawaij, a fragrant Yemeni spice blend. Lauren shares her family's recipe so you can make your own.

INGREDIENTS

SOUP:

- 400 g (2 cups) dried cannellini (or other white) beans
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 teaspoons hawaij spice mix (see below)
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 litres (8 cups) vegetable stock
- Sea salt, to taste
- Chopped coriander, to serve

HAWAIJ SPICE MIX:

Makes about ½ cup.

- 2 tablespoons ground coriander
- 2 tablespoons ground cumin
- 1 ½ tablespoons ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon ground cardamom
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves

Prepare the beans

1. Soak beans in water overnight. Drain and rinse.
2. In a pot, cover beans with water, bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 1 hour until tender. Drain and set aside.

Make the soup

1. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Sauté onions and garlic for 20 minutes until soft.
2. Stir in hawaij and cook for 1–2 minutes until fragrant. Add tomato paste and cook for 1 minute.
3. Add beans and vegetable stock, simmering for 1 hour.
4. Mash some beans to thicken. Season with salt and garnish with coriander.

Notes:

Store extra hawaij in an airtight container for up to 6 months. Serve soup with crusty bread.

Serves 6.

