



BACK AT THE FARM MISSION GARDEN

by Lorraine Glazar

This agricultural museum sited between the Santa Cruz River and Sentinel Peak is a reconstruction of a three-acre walled garden that was cultivated by all the people that called Tucson home over its 4,000+ years of continual occupation and agriculture. Clearly a labor of love, the Garden, supported by a not-for-profit organization called Friends of Tucson's Birthplace, is a place of delight for those interested in history, gardening, and foodways.

As early as 2100 B.C., "First Farmers" grew maize, beans, and squash, which can be seen (in summer) in the Early Agriculture area of the Garden. The Hohokam evolved complex irrigation systems and added hard kernel popcorn, fleshy squash, and tepary and lima beans. The O'odham ingeniously planted during the Monsoon season, often doubling up the cultivated areas in case the water washed the first plantings away.

The Spanish Colonial era reveals those European vegetables and fruits that could grow in Tucson's climate. There are peaceful orchards of citrus, fig, pomegranate and quince trees, flanked by grapevines. They also grew barley, winter wheat, legumes and all kinds of herbs for both culinary and medicinal use.

The Mexican Garden replicates the Huertas, or small family plots, where from about the 1820s people grew their own food in a common area walled to keep out pests and marauding animals. About fifty years after this time, the Chinese, who had come to build the railroad, stayed and became the main commercial source of vegetable selling, initially traveling around the city in wagons. Bitter and winter melons, long green beans, and Chinese broccoli were some of the crops they brought with them.

Both the Mexican and Chinese gardens feature charming ramadas with picnic-style tables and benches, and these areas host instructional activities for visiting classes and children. The docents in these gardens are enthusiastic and encourage children in many interactive gardening activities.



There are also Anglo, Yoeme, and African American gardens in the Mission Garden, which are more active in summer due to the crops they grew and the way that these growers used seasonal water in the summer.

Cutting across these "timeline gardens" is the giver of life in the desert, an acacia that fittingly extends from the Early Agriculture section to an area called "Tomorrow's Gardens" – an area devoted to what growing food might look like in the future. In the winter, visitors can see what the Sonoran White Wheat (a heritage variety of wheat used in Barrio Bread's Heritage loaves) looks like in the field.

In each season, Mission Garden will offer for sale produce they have recently harvested, as well as seeds for some of the heritage crops they grow. The small museum has many interesting historical photos and narration of the walled garden's development.

Check the website (<https://www.missiongarden.org>) for before visiting, as the Garden's hours vary with the seasons.

Editor's note: Tucson CSA partners with Mission Garden to source specialty produce for our CSA shares and the CSA Shop. Most recently, CSA members may have enjoyed Mission Garden's Mexican Sweet Limes, which were included in your produce shares. In the coming months, you can expect to find their seasonal figs, pomegranates, quince, and more for sale in the CSA Shop.



SAVE THE DATE

APRIL 13

*Screening:
Are Edible Landscapes
and Trees the Answer
to Arizona's Rising
Climate Crisis?*

*To watch, go to:
goodfoodfinderaz.com*

*Use the code
TUCSONCSA for 20%
off at checkout*

MAY 22

*Food Justice
Book Club Meeting
(Rescheduled)*

CSA SEASONAL RECIPES

ROASTED CAULIFLOWER OR BROCCOLI & CHEESE DIP

Philippe Waterinckx, Tucson CSA

- 1 cauliflower
- 1/4 cup fresh goat cheese
- 1/4 cup cream cheese
- 1/4 cup feta
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan
- 1/2 to 1 cup milk
- 2 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 1/4 cup finely chopped parsley or dill
- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste



Heat oven to 375 F. Cut cauliflower or broccoli lengthwise through the head and stem into 1/4 to 1/2 inch slices. Toss with a tablespoon or so of olive oil to coat. Lay on lightly greased baking sheet and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake for about 15 minutes, until beginning to brown just slightly, then flip the and bake for another 10-15 minutes until well-browned on edges.

Dip: Add roasted cauliflower and remaining ingredients to a bowl and beat everything with an egg beater or whisk until smooth. Add extra milk if necessary to obtain a creamy, semi-liquid consistency. Dig in with bread, chips, and veggies.

Find more recipes on the back



HOW TO PROCESS CITRUS PRESERVING CITRUS FOR FUTURE USE

by Shelby Thompson

This time of the year you might find yourself overwhelmed by an abundance of local citrus in your produce drawer. Whether you haven't gotten through the last few CSA portions or your neighbor gifted you a bag of lemons from their tree, it's beneficial to take some time and preserve your citrus now so that you can enjoy summer margaritas, lemonade, bright salad dressings, and zesty baked treats later.

To preserve citrus without altering its flavor or texture, it's best to process and freeze it. Begin by zesting your citrus, then laying the zest in a single layer on a piece of parchment paper before placing it in the freezer. Once the zest is frozen, transfer it to an airtight bag or container and store it in the freezer until you're ready to use it. Once the citrus has been zested, juice and strain the naked fruits and pour the juice into your preferred storage containers (ice cube trays work well for lemon juice, which is typically used in small amounts). Simply take the frozen juice out of the freezer a few hours before you need it. Other wonderful (albeit more time-consuming) ways to preserve citrus include salt-preserved citrus, candied citrus peels, citrus marmalade, and dried citrus. By spending a little time preserving your citrus now, you can avoid shriveled, mold-covered fruit and missed opportunities.



WE'RE READING

*Cultivating Food
Justice: Race, Class, and
Sustainability*
Alison Hope Alkon,
Julian Agyeman



WE'RE LISTENING TO

*Diaspora Co.'s Sana
Javeri Kadri is Changing
the Spice Industry*
Radio Cherry Bomb



WE'RE WATCHING

Waffles and Mochi
Netflix



ON SOCIAL

Follow @GoodFoodAZ
to learn how you can be an
advocate for local farming
Instagram



A WEEK AT MY TABLE

by Ann Crane

When we first joined a CSA in 2011, my partner expressed a degree of uncertainty. "At the co-op or grocery, you only buy what you want—and not buy anything you don't want," he said. The notion of receiving a CSA share was a sea change. As a small gardener, this was not a new concept for me; however, my harvest usually only focused on the summer and fall.

I had not yet learned to grow a garden through a full calendar year cycle. The winter CSA was initially intimidating. My initial essential questions of, "What's this?" and, "how do I use it?" evolved into anticipation as I experienced the seasonal shifts of bitters, herbs and citrus.

Now that I am a seasoned CSA member, I dedicate time one day a week to note the week's harvest, assess what remains from the previous week, take stock of my dry goods, and create meal planning for the week. I explore blogs and utilize my own reading collection. I should keep a scribe next to me when putting away each vegetable and herb as they have, or should have, a voice in the matter. Vegetables can speak, right?

This week at my table included a

batch of Ramona Farms chickpeas churned into a tahini-free hummus with roasted broccoli. The colorful swiss chard stalks and dark greens belt out like a symphony with sweet potato and a lemon vinaigrette. And pairing a protein along with steamed/pan grilled pac choy with a mustard vinaigrette was simply delightful.

This week at my table also included a varietal order of dried chiles from Native Seeds/SEARCH in preparation of my continued summer reading from Diana Kennedy's *Oaxaca al Gusto*. I will also be patiently watching for our Sonoran Desert cholla buds to show their first signs they are ready to be harvested.

SPICY FENNEL WITH WHITE BEANS AND THYME

Kusuma Rao, Ruchikala

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 pound fennel bulbs, thinly sliced
- 1 large yellow onion
- 2 teaspoons crushed red pepper
- 1 ½ teaspoons thyme
- 4 cloves garlic, very finely minced
- 2 cups cooked and drained white beans
- ¾ cup of water
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- Parsley

In a large high-sided skillet on medium heat add olive oil and the sliced fennel. After about 6 minutes or so add the onion, crushed red pepper, and thyme. Continue to cook on medium to medium high heat, stirring to make sure nothing sticks to the bottom of the pan. You will be lightly caramelizing the fennel, so it may take up to 15 more minutes. When the fennel and onion are lightly brown and softened, add garlic and sauté for another minute or two. Add the cooked white beans and salt along with ¾ cup of water and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Garnish with chopped parsley fennel fronds and serve with white jasmine rice.

QUICK INDIAN-INSPIRED GREENS AND LENTIL SOUP

Kusuma Rao, Ruchikala

- 3 cups of cooked lentils (split mung dal is my favorite)
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1/2 teaspoon of cumin seeds
- 1-2 dried red chilies
- 1/2 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 jalapeño
- 1 teaspoon garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons grated ginger
- 3 cups chopped greens
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander

In a 4-quart saucepan, warm the oil on low to medium heat and add dried red chilies and cumin seeds. When the oil starts to smell fragrant and the cumin seeds just begin to lightly toast (this should take about 2-3 minutes but watch your cumin, don't let it burn) add the turmeric and diced jalapeno. Sauté for 1-2 minutes and then add ginger and garlic. Add chopped greens. Raise the temperature to medium-high and sauté with 1/2 teaspoon of salt and coriander powder (about 3-4 minutes until they are nice and tender). Add the lentils and simmer for another 5-10 minutes. Serve over basmati rice and top with fresh cilantro.