



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 482 ~ April 6, 2015 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Spring 2015

Harvest list is online

THE BACK PAGE

- Scalloped Potatoes and Greens
- Spicy Fennel with White Beans and Thyme
- Stuffed Artichokes
- Stewed Artichokes and Potatoes

Many more recipes on our website

Cheese shares will resume the first week of May.

CSA Tip – E-mail list

E-mail is our primary way of communicating with you.

All Tucson CSA members who have an active subscription (meaning they are currently subscribed to a share), receive a weekly email showing them how much they have on their CSA account and when their next pick up is.

Active members are also notified by e-mail when:

- their CSA account dips below \$25
- their CSA account is about to be charged again (for members who are on Autopay)
- their subscription is about to expire
- their subscription gets reactivated
- they make a subscription change.

If you are not receiving any e-mails from us, it means that our e-mails are ending up in your spam folder. Make sure our e-mail address:

tucsoncsa@tucsoncsa.org

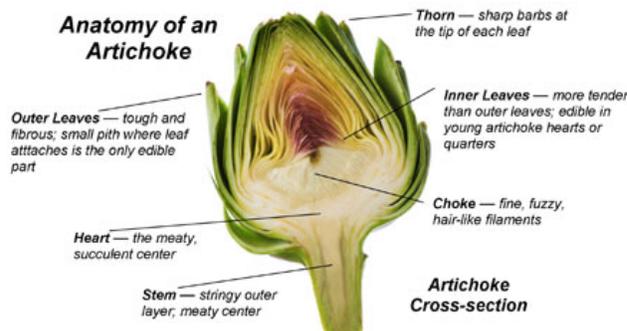
is on your "accepted" list.

ARTICHOKES

The globe artichoke (*Cynara cardunculus* var. *scolymus*) is a perennial thistle believed to have originated in Southern Europe around the Mediterranean. It is a spectacular plant that grows up to 6 feet tall, with arching, deeply indented, silvery-green leaves up to 3 feet long. Its purple flowers develop from a large edible bud that measures 3-6 inches in diameter and features numerous fibrous triangular scales ranging from green to purple.

It seems that the artichoke was mostly developed in Sicily, Italy: there is mention of the plant in Greek and Roman literature as far back as 77 AD. Artichokes were also cultivated by the North African Moors in Spain around 800 AD. The Spanish settlers brought artichokes to California in the 1600's. However, artichokes did not become popular in California until the 1920's. The artichoke really made it on the national map when Marilyn Monroe was crowned Artichoke Queen in 1948. Eighty percent of all artichokes grown commercially in the U.S. are grown in Castroville, California. Castroville may call itself "the artichoke capital of the world" but Italy is by far the largest producer of artichokes (it produces about 10 times more artichokes than the U.S.).

The edible portion of the buds consists primarily of the fleshy lower portions of the flower bracts and the base, known as the "heart"; the mass of immature florets in the center of the bud is called the "choke" or beard. These are inedible in older larger flowers.



There are several ways to cook and eat artichokes. Here's the simplest one. Throw your artichokes in boiling water and cook for 30 minutes to 1 hour (depending on their size). Drain. Artichokes may be eaten warm or cold. To eat, pluck each scaly leaf and dip the fleshy end in a dip, and pull the flesh through your teeth. Dips may consist of mayonnaise, or melted butter with a bit of lemon juice.

Some artichoke facts:

- Artichokes are low in calories and fat (if you leave out all the butter you dip them into), and they are rich source of dietary fiber.
- They have a cholesterol reduction action
- They are rich in folic acid, B-complex vitamins and vitamin K
- They are rich in vitamin C, but only when they are fresh (not the canned ones)

Scalloped Potatoes and Greens

By Philippe, Tucson CSA

4 medium potatoes, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons butter
1 bunch scallions (or I'itoi onions), sliced
1 bunch greens (any greens), sliced in ribbons
2 tablespoons flour
2 cups milk
1 dash nutmeg
1 teaspoon dry mustard
Salt and pepper to taste

Heat oven to 350°. Lightly grease an 11 x 7-inch baking dish. Melt butter in a medium saucepan. Add scallions and sauté for one minute. Stir in flour until smooth. Add milk and stir until thick and bubbly. Add salt, pepper, mustard and nutmeg. Stir in greens. Pour mixture over potatoes and mix well but gently. Pour the potato mixture into baking dish. Cover with foil. Bake for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake for another 15-20 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.

Spicy Fennel with White Beans and Thyme

Kusuma Rao, ruchikala.wordpress.com

This simple comfort food meal comes together within a half an hour. Cooking down the fennel adds a lovely depth of flavor with few ingredients. I suggest serving the dish with cooked jasmine rice, as it's plumper and more fragrant. I like to drizzle the rice with a touch of fruity olive oil or a small sliver of good butter- it just helps bring the dish together.

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 share fennel bulbs, thinly sliced
½ yellow onion, thinly sliced
2 teaspoons crushed red pepper, or to taste
1 ½ teaspoons thyme
2 cloves garlic, very finely minced
2 cups cooked and drained white beans
¼ cup of water
Salt to taste
Fennel fronds to garnish

In a large high-sided skillet on medium heat add olive oil and add 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 clove and sauté for another minute or two. Add the cooked white beans and salt along with water and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Garnish with fennel fronds and serve with white jasmine rice or pasta.

Stuffed Artichoke

Philippe, Tucson CSA

Use this cooking method if you get medium or large artichokes in your share.

1 large or two medium artichokes
1 small onion
2 garlic cloves
Oil, vinegar, salt, pepper, herbs

With a sharp knife, remove the top third of the artichoke as well as the stem. With scissors, cut the remaining sharp tips off the leaves. Using your thumbs, separate the leaves as much as you can. Don't hesitate to apply force – artichokes are tough babes! Peel an onion, cut it in half, and slice it into 1/3" thick strips. Peel two cloves of garlic and cut them into 4 to 6 slices each. Insert the garlic slices and ends of the onion strips among the leaves. Pack in as many as you can! Place artichokes in a small saucepan. Fill the pan with water halfway up the height of the artichoke. Pour 1/4 cup oil and 1/4 cup vinegar over the top of the artichoke. Sprinkle the artichoke with salt, pepper, and thyme, Italian herbs, or Herbes de Provence (or any seasoning of your choice). Cover, bring to a boil, and simmer for 1 to 1-1/2 hours. Serve hot, warm or cold, by itself or with a garlic-butter dip.

Stewed Artichokes and Potatoes

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Use this method if you get smaller artichokes in your share. Small artichokes have a less developed choke that is edible. You will be paring the artichokes down to their completely edible cores, removing any tough outer leaves. On very small artichokes this will mean removing only a couple of layers of leaves, plus the top half of the remaining leaves. For medium size artichokes, you may have to be relentless and remove several layers of outer leaves before you get to the tender inner ones.

3-5 baby artichokes, trimmed and quartered lengthwise
2-3 new potatoes, chopped
½ sweet onion, diced
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 can chopped tomatoes
1 teaspoon thyme
1 teaspoon oregano or marjoram
Drizzle balsamic vinegar and olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

To trim artichokes, cut stems from base, remove tough outer leaves and trim off top ½-inch of vegetable. Cut each choke into quarters and place in water with a bit of lemon juice until ready to use. Cut potatoes and onions, drain artichokes and combine all ingredients together in a medium soup pot. Bring to a slow simmer and cook over medium low heat for about 35 minutes until all ingredients are tender. Drizzle with vinegar and oil, add salt and pepper to taste. Serve over rice, pasta or polenta.