



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 201 ~ August 10, 2009 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Summer '09 Week 11 of 13

Harvest list is online

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More recipes online

News from Crooked Sky

You may have noticed the corn we had earlier in the session was a troubled crop. Worry not—a second crop of Sweetie 82, Truckers Delight and Silver Queen (love those names!) is now ready for harvest. We may also get baby corn and popcorn. Yum!

Less good news on the fruit. Freak spring weather (high winds and late frost) destroyed many of the peach, plum, and apricot blossoms from trees in the orchard Farmer Frank leases near Aravaipa. But, the pears were spared—soon we'll have them in our shares! Chiles and bell peppers are on the way and if the weather cooperates, tomatoes will find us in September.

Fall Session Sign-Ups

August 1 to 31: current and former members renewals.

August 16 to 31: subscriptions open to the Invitation List (formerly called the Wait List).

Sign-ups will close when we fill up, **no later than August 31.**

We recommend that current and former members sign up before August 16 to ensure your continued membership!

For subscription details go online and look under Join > Subscriptions & Cost.

Newsletter Editor

Kimi Eisele & Philippe Waterinckx

SUPPORT NATIVE FOODS & LIFEWAYS AT THE DESERT RAIN CAFÉ

(a special report from Jen McCormack, doctoral student of the UA Dept. of Geography and Regional Development)

If you've ever wanted to taste the Sonoran desert via tepary beans, cholla buds and saguaro fruit—head down to the Desert Rain Café in Sells. Located in the heart of the Tohono O'odham Nation (TO), the Desert Rain Café is a combination of delicious, locally produced food and a very cool non-profit sensibility.



A project of Tohono O'odham Community Action (TOCA), the Desert Rain Café features traditional produce cooked in healthy (and yummy) presentations. Partly an initiative to promote healthy diets and control diabetes, Desert Rain Café is founded on Tohono O'odham lifeways, including a deep respect for the foods that have sustained countless generations. If that wasn't enough to inspire you, Desert Rain Café is also a non-profit restaurant. The proceeds go right back to TO communities in the form of education funding. This is a gastronomic trifecta: local, delicious and community action.

On our visit, my friend Jahan and I had just taught a mapping workshop at Tohono O'odham Community College and were famished. Vicki, our TOCC guru, had given us directions to the café from the college via storied landmarks, ("Poltergeist Road!" not its official name so don't look for it) to the new Basha's shopping center. The building is pristine and gold-hued, with mostly outside seating (there is a mister to cool and they offer carry-out options).

Indecision and gluttony prompted an immediate demand for the "Desert Rain Sampler": "Desert Humus" (white tepary bean, garlic and lemon), "Cholla Pico de Gallo" (salsa with cholla buds, tomatillos and chiles) and "Tepary Bean Dip" (blended brown tepary beans). All three dishes were lovely—clean flavors and immediately gratifying. Due to its smooth texture and standout tanginess, we leveled the desert hummus bowl quickly.

Jahan ordered the "White and Green Chile," a stew of white tepary beans, chicken, roasted chiles and bits of avocado floating on top. The chicken was grilled and added an earthy flavor, sliced in just before serving. The broth of the stew was rich and flavorful from the beans, and was served with a generous piece of cornbread.

I had the "Ha:l Enchiladas," made from sautéed O'odham squash then baked with cheese and green salsa, served with a dark green salad on the side. Unlike some atomic enchiladas, which can land with a thud, this dish was soft and fluffy. The creaminess came from the squash and corn, not an overabundance of cheese. We drank agave-sweetened lemonade and left blissed out.

The Desert Rain Café is open Monday through Friday, 7:00 am until 6:00pm in the Tohono Plaza on Main Street, Sells. Their website includes the menu, philosophy, information on traditional foods and recent news blurbs, including a recent feature by NPR. Hurry down before the hipsters descend, and enjoy a truly memorable desert feast.

www.desertraincafe.com/www.desertraincafe.com/Welcome.html

-Jen McCormack

Spicy Green Beans

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

1 bag green beans
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon grated ginger
1/2 teaspoon chili flakes (or to taste)
2 teaspoons vegetable oil
Soy sauce to taste
Garnish with sliced green onions

Clean beans and remove stem end. Heat oil in skillet over medium high heat. Add garlic, ginger and chili flakes and stir quickly for about 30 seconds. Add green beans and toss to coat. Drizzle with a little soy sauce and water, then cover and cook over medium heat for about 5 minutes. Add more soy sauce if needed and serve.

Sweet Potato Frites

From Lorraine Glazar, TCSA

Great side with grilled foods!

One small sweet potato per person
One teaspoon melted butter
1/2 teaspoon red chili powder □
Salt to taste

Scrub the skin of the sweet potato thoroughly. Cut into lengthwise sticks like French fries. Toss in the melted butter and place in a single layer on a cookie sheet. Sprinkle with spice and salt. Bake at 425 degrees for twenty minutes. Cumin may be substituted for the red chili for a milder taste.

Raita or Tzatziki Salad

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

These are yogurt based salads, great served with spicy foods. There is plenty of room for variation in the recipe, as well as how you serve it. I like it best as a side dish, along with rice and curry. It is also good as a dip or dressing.

1 cucumber, peeled and grated or finely diced
1/2 small onion, finely diced
1 small tomato, seeded and diced
1 cup yogurt □ Salt and pepper to taste

Add any variation of the following:

1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon mustard seeds, toasted in a hot skillet
1 tsp cayenne pepper
Handful chopped fresh cilantro and/or mint

Mix all ingredients together and let sit at least 30 minutes before serving.

Heavenly Grilled Corn on the Cob

Heidi DeCosmo, TCSA

This is a great way to enjoy fresh corn. The kernels will steam in the husks and foil, and the grill adds a smoky flavor. Try adding chili spice, thyme, or curry powder in place of paprika.

2 ears corn
1 teaspoons paprika
2 teaspoons butter
1 teaspoon ground pepper
1 tablespoon honey
1 teaspoon sea salt

Heat the grill to medium-high. Carefully peel back the husks and remove the silk from each ear. Rub 1 teaspoon butter on each ear of corn. Drizzle the honey on the corn and sprinkle with the paprika, pepper and salt. Wrap the husks back around the corn. Cover each ear of corn with aluminum foil. Place the corn on the grill. Close the lid and cook for 5 minutes. Turn the ears over with tongs and cook 5 minutes more. Turn corn one more time and finish cooking another 5 minutes. Carefully remove foil and pull back husks to serve.

Greek Lemon Potatoes

Paula Borchardt, Tucson CSA

8 to 12 Red La Soda potatoes
1/4 cup lemon juice
2 teaspoons lemon zest
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 1/2 tablespoons fresh oregano, or 1 teaspoon dried
3 cloves garlic, minced
2/3 cup crumbled feta cheese
1 cup hot water

Slice potatoes into 1/4" thick pieces and combine in a mixing bowl with the lemon juice, lemon zest, olive oil, oregano, and garlic. Place all in a buttered 13x9x2 baking pan. Pour 1 cup hot water over all and bake uncovered at 450° for 30 minutes. Sprinkle the feta cheese on top and bake for an additional 15 minutes.