



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Spring 2011

Harvest list is online

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Many more recipes in
our online recipe archive

Nopalitos... mmmmmhhh!



A true food of the desert, nopales, or prickly pear pads, combine the flavors of asparagus, green beans and citrus into one neat little package. All of that without the hassle of having to de-spine them, because the farm does it for you. How much better does it get!

If you're a nopales beginner, grilling them is the way to go. With a sharp knife, make shallow parallel incisions on each side of the pads, about 1/3-inch apart. Brush each pad lightly with olive oil. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. In a grill pan or a cast-iron frying pan over medium-high heat, or on an outdoor grill, sear the pads, allowing three to four minutes per side, until they are yellowish green with charred spots. Press down on the pads with a potato masher, if necessary, to keep them in contact with the surface of the pan. When tender, remove from grill. Serve whole or sliced in strips. Add to salad or serve as side dish with a sprinkle of lemon juice.

And of course, you can find many more ways of using nopales in our recipe archive.

A COOKING CLASS WITH OUR AMAZING SARA JONES

If you are new to the CSA and are still challenged by how to use your CSA share wisely, this is just the class for you. But even if you are a veteran CSA member, Sara is bound to teach you a cooking trick or two, or get you out of a rut. The class will introduce the basics of ingredient-driven cooking (as opposed to the more traditional recipe-driven approach). Sara will cover classic flavor combos and cooking techniques and how to apply them to your weekly produce haul. Participants will learn how to integrate CSA produce into their favorite recipes, how to design new dishes that highlight seasonally available foods and learn multiple ways to use the same produce, such as the way you chop or cook them. Sara will demonstrate several easily adaptable recipes and provide samples for tasting.

When: Saturday, April 30th, 2:00 to 3:30 PM

Where: Mercado San Agustin kitchen (Congress and Avenida del Convento)

By reservation only: with Sara during the CSA pickup (spaces are limited)

Cost: \$20 (at the time of reservation)

IT'S TRANSITION TIME AT THE FARM

Between the cold weather crops and the warm weather crops comes a stretch of a few weeks when the former are gradually fading out and the latter are slowly making their appearance. You will have noticed that the leafy greens have been fewer lately. We are still getting some salad mixes, but those are coming to an end too and they can look a bit weather beaten at times (we recommend that you eat them within a day or two of getting them). It's just how things are. Also, until the warm weather crops come into full swing, you can expect a lot of beets and carrots, because they keep very well in the ground until harvested and therefore make a good transition crop. (One member recently told us he enjoyed Sara's "Beet and Carrot Cake" recipe from the website.)

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: SARAH ZIDONIK



Occasionally we feature our volunteers in the newsletter so you can get to know them outside the context of the CSA. We're proud to feature Sarah Zidonik this week. Sarah has been with the CSA for almost two-and-a-half years and you can usually find her hiding behind piles of produce at the produce line on Wednesdays. When she is not at the produce line, she pursues her Masters of Fine Arts in studio art at the University of Arizona. Sarah specializes in printmaking and experiments with many different media. Her current project is "Paper Boat Odyssey," where she transforms the pages of Homer's Odyssey into two different art forms. First, she alters the Odyssey's story by drawing and painting on the pages of its twenty four books, creating a new version of it altogether. In parallel, she folds more pages from the Odyssey into paper boats which she then sows together to ultimately create a standing artistic structure. "It takes one minute to make a boat," says Sarah. And it has taken months to complete the structure... Sarah's "Paper Boat Odyssey" can be seen at the University of Arizona Museum of Art until May 15, with a reception on April 21 from 5:00 to 6:30 PM. (Source: *Arizona Daily Wildcat*, 3/9/11.)

You can check Sarah's Paper Boat Odyssey blog at paperboatodyssey.wordpress.com

Three Bean Salad with Nopalitos

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This salad is a take on the traditional canned three bean salad, with the nopales taking the role of the green beans. The different colors and sizes add interest, or you can use just one type of bean for convenience.

2 cactus pads, grilled or broiled and cut into bite size pieces
1 cup cooked white beans
1 cup cooked kidney beans
1 cup cooked black beans
½ bunch green onion, chopped
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 tablespoon oil
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
2 teaspoons lemon juice
Salt and pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients and stir well to mix. Let salad sit for at least one hour before serving.

Creamy Rapini Pasta

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

The creaminess of this dish is provided by hummus rather than a dairy product. Use a packaged, prepared hummus for a really simple recipe. Or you can make your own at home by pureeing any cooked white bean with garlic, oil, lemon juice, tahini and salt.

1 bunch rapini (greens and florets), cleaned and chopped
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 regular size package pasta
About ½ cup hummus

While pasta is boiling in well-salted water, sauté rapini in olive oil in a large pan over medium high heat. When pasta is al dente, drain, reserving some of the cooking water. Add pasta and hummus to greens and toss together.

Note: Add pasta water, if needed, to help thin hummus and coat pasta.

Season with salt and pepper, if needed, and serve.

Parsnip Carrot Bisque

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

1 tablespoon oil
2 small potatoes, chopped
3 parsnips, chopped
3 carrots, chopped
1 bunch green onion, chopped
1 inch fresh ginger, grated
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 can coconut milk

1 pinch nutmeg
Salt and pepper to taste

In a large saucepan, heat oil over medium high heat. Add veggies, coriander and ginger and stir to coat. Add coconut milk plus one can water. Bring to a boil, then simmer about 20 minutes until veggies are tender. Add nutmeg, salt and pepper. Puree soup in blender in small batches and serve garnished with nutmeg.

Arugula, Orange and Beet Salad

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

1 bunch arugula, washed and stemmed
2 oranges
2-3 beets, depending on size
¼ cup orange juice
¼ cup olive or canola oil
½ to 1 teaspoon marmalade (optional)
2 tablespoons finely chopped cilantro (optional)
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
Salt and pepper to taste

Arrange the arugula on individual plates or a large platter. Cut the peel off the oranges, then slice crosswise into rounds. If the beets are large, they may need peeling, but if small, simply grate them. Mix the orange juice, oil, mustard, marmalade and cilantro in a blender to make a dressing. (Alternatively, shake in a jar until emulsified or whisk in a bowl). Add salt and pepper to your taste. Top the arugula with orange slices and sprinkle with the grated beets. Dress with the orange vinaigrette.

Chocolate Beet Cake

Paula Borchardt, Tucson CSA

Approximately 1 cup cooked, chopped beets
1/4 cup water
Approximately 1 cup applesauce
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
1/2 cup cocoa
1 cup sugar
2 teaspoons baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup chocolate chips

Puree the beets and water in a blender or food processor. Pour into a large measuring container and add enough applesauce to make two cups total. Mix in the vanilla extract and apple cider vinegar. In a separate bowl, mix all the other ingredients together; fold in the beet mixture and mix all thoroughly. Bake in a pre-greased 9×13" pan at 325° for 35 minutes.