



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Spring 2011

Harvest list is online

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our online recipe archive

COOKING 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 a more traditional recipe-driven approach). Sara will cover classic flavor combos and cooking techniques as well as how to apply those creatively to your weekly CSA produce. 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, like for example changing the size of the dice or the way you chop or cook vegetables. 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). If you don't know Sara, ask any volunteer to direct you to her.

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

A REMARKABLE GROUP OF PEOPLE by Philippe

I and other volunteers often reflect on how uplifting it is to be at the CSA. We love what goes on in the courtyard at pickup time. There's a good atmosphere there! Well, it's a pleasant courtyard for a start. And we give the pickup its form and structure. But by far the biggest contributors to that atmosphere are the CSA members. You all form a kind, intelligent and caring community. It feels like an amazing section of the population. Time after time, we feel very lucky to have the opportunity to interact with such a remarkable group.

AW, SUGAR SUGAR by Kimi Eisele

I recently gave myself a dietary challenge. I gave up sugar for 40 days. (For Lent, actually, even though I'm not Catholic.)

After all, there's been a lot of murmuring in the news lately about the fact that sugar isn't just "bad for you" because it rots your teeth and can lead to obesity, but that it might actually be harmful in other ways.

By sugar, I mean all refined sugar and of course any corn syrups, including high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS). And, in case you get confused like I do, refined sugar, or sucrose, is a 50-50 mixture of glucose and fructose. Bread, potatoes, and other carbohydrate-rich foods on the other hand break down to just glucose as we digest them. Fructose is the sweet stuff. High-fructose corn syrup, for instance is 55 percent fructose and 45 percent glucose.

Robert Lustig, a pediatric endocrinologist at the University of California, is one of the main researchers who claims sugar is harmful. His research reveals that refined sugar and HFCS can be particularly hard on the liver. This is because both HFCS and the fructose part of sugar is metabolized by the liver. Glucose, on the other hand, is metabolized by the whole orchestra of cells in our body. So consuming sugar (glucose and fructose) means the liver has to work extra hard, and if you're drinking the sugar (in soda or fruit juices, say), the liver has to kick in nearly immediately. If, instead, you ate apples, or several apples, your body would process the sugar more slowly and evenly. From Lustig's perspective, overconsumption of sugar can cause fatty liver disease, which can lead to cirrhosis and perhaps, a liver transplant.

Not all scientists back Lustig's claims, however. The verdict is still out on how exactly the body processes various forms of sugar, so while it's fun to blame a single food source for all of your troubles, it may be more complicated than that. Also, scientists say that the effects of refined sugar and HFCS on the body depend on just how much of them you consume.

So while the scientists keep dissecting the issue, I say we take things into our own hands and find out for ourselves just how "toxic" sugar might be for us.

I found giving up sugar wasn't all that hard. In fact, I liked life without sugar. I savored the natural sweetness of oranges and ate forkfuls of melons. And on Easter morning, when the "fast" officially ended, I didn't wake up searching desperately for the jelly beans. I squeezed up some fresh orange and carrot juice and happily licked my lips. I did eat one too many scones, however. But that's a different story.

Stuffed Artichokes

Philippe, Tucson CSA

1 large or 3 small 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 artichoke in a small saucepan. Fill the pan with water halfway up the height of the artichoke. Pour ¼ cup oil and ¼ 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 45 minutes to 1-1/2 hours (depending on size of artichokes). Serve hot, warm or cold, by itself or with a garlic-butter dip.

Marinated Daikon and Carrots

From Phoenix CSA

These marinated veggies are great in a sandwich or wrapped up in spring rolls.

1 cup rice vinegar or distilled white vinegar
½ cup sugar
¾ pound daikon, small, peeled, cut into julienne
1 ½ pounds carrots, peeled and cut into julienne
1 ½ teaspoon salt

Combine the vinegar and sugar and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool. Place the radishes, carrots, and salt in a bowl and toss several times. Set aside for 20 minutes, then rinse thoroughly. Using your hands, squeeze the vegetables to remove the excess water. Pat dry with paper towels and place in a bowl. Add the vinegar mixture and let the vegetables marinate at least 1 hour before serving. To store, transfer to a tight-lidded jar and refrigerate. The vegetables will keep for up to 3 weeks.

Carrot Miso Dressing-new

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This is great for salads, sprinkled with some sesame seeds as a garnish. The dressing could also be used as a pasta sauce, tossed over soba or udon noodles.

2-3 medium to large carrots
1-2 green onions
1 inch peeled ginger, chopped
2 tablespoons miso
2 tablespoons sesame oil

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
¼ cup rice wine vinegar

Clean carrots and remove tops and bottoms, chop into pieces. Put all ingredients in a food processor or blender and pulse a bit to break down carrots. Puree dressing for a couple of minutes until dressing is mostly smooth and carrot bits are very small.

Endive Pasta Salad

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This dish would be equally delicious served hot or cold, so make extra for leftovers.

1 bunch endive, cleaned and roughly chopped
½ onion, chopped
1 can drained white beans, or about 1 ½ cups cooked white beans
1 regular size package penne pasta, cooked and drained
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 can tuna, drained (optional)
2 tablespoons capers
¼ cup parmesan cheese (optional)
Salt and pepper to taste

Sauté onion in oil in a skillet over medium high heat, stirring occasionally until golden brown. Add endive and cook until just beginning to wilt (about 2 minutes). Stir all ingredients together in a large bowl and add salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot, or chill and serve as a cold salad.

Radish and Yogurt Spread

Philippe, Tucson CSA

½ bunch radishes, cut in slices
1 cup Greek yogurt
A few stalks of green onions, chopped
Salt and pepper
Sliced bread

Mix together radishes and yogurt. Spread on bread slices. Sprinkle with green onions, salt and pepper.

Grapefruit Seltzer

This is an incredibly refreshing drink for hot days. Much healthier than store-bought sodas! Whenever you have more citrus than you can handle at any one time, squeeze it and freeze the juice in ice cube trays for a seltzer treat on another hot day. Add a bit of crushed mint or basil for an extra twist.

1 part grapefruit juice (or any citrus juice)
1 part sparkling water
Agave nectar, to taste
Stir together juice and agave nectar, about 2 teaspoons per cup of juice. Add sparkling water and taste for sweetness, adding more nectar if desired. Serve over ice.