



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Spring 2011

Harvest list is online

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Parsnips

The parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) is a root vegetable related to the carrot.

Parsnips resemble carrots, but are paler than most carrots and have a sweeter taste, especially when cooked. The buttery, slightly spicy, sweet flavor of cooked mature (often picked after the first frost) parsnips is reminiscent of butterscotch, honey, and subtle cardamom.

While parsnips can be eaten raw, they are more commonly served cooked. Parsnips can be boiled, roasted or used in stews, soups and casseroles. In some cases, parsnips are boiled and the solid portions are removed from the soup or stew, leaving behind a more subtle flavor than the whole root and contributing starch to thicken the dish.



Farm Tour: Mark Your Calendars

Want to meet your farmer and see where your CSA vegetables grow?

Crooked Sky Farms will have an open day on Sunday, June 5th

Details in future newsletters. Stay tuned!

FUNNY FENNEL

Fennel is native to southern Europe and southwestern Asia. It is widely cultivated for its edible, strongly-flavored bulbs, leaves, flowers and seeds. The flavor is similar to that of licorice though generally not as strong. Fennel may be used raw or cooked. However, cook fennel as little as possible in order to preserve its flavor. With its soft anise flavor, fennel is sweet, refreshing, and delectable. Because a fennel bulb has a well-defined shape, it can assume a strong role on the plate, especially when cooked in halves. Fennel bulb is a key ingredient in some Italian and German salads, often tossed with chicory and avocado, or it can be braised and served as a warm side dish. It is delicious braised, baked, steamed, sautéed, or grilled.

Baby fennel is perfect for salads. Good partners for baby fennel include olive oil, butter, thyme, bay parsley, fennel seeds, orange, lemon, saffron, tomatoes, potatoes, olives, garlic, Parmesan, Gruyere, and goat cheese.

Many egg, fish, and other dishes employ fresh or dried fennel leaves. One may also blanch and/or marinate the leaves, or cook them in risotto. In all cases, the leaves lend their characteristically mild, anise-like flavor.

Fennel flowers can be used to garnish dishes and they are a particularly suited ingredient for pickling mixes, such as pickled cucumber or beets.

CSA MUSICIANS PROFILES: CYRIL BARRETT by Jennifer Block

One year ago, Cyril Barrett came home from work to a house that had been broken into and turned upside down. "They took \$10,000 worth of guitars," says Barrett. "I was really bummed. I was trying to do anything to shake off that feeling." So with his last remaining guitar he put together a band with a name cheerier than his mood: The Possibles. "Not the possibilities, not possibly-gonna-be-a-big-band," he says about the choice, "The Possibles is just positive." Bandmate Tom Moore often joins him at the CSA pickup.

Barrett began playing guitar and writing songs in his twenties. After moving from Idaho to Seattle, a band called the Walkabouts took notice and introduced him to their indie record label. He released four albums and toured overseas for much of the 90s. The songs, he says, can't be forced. "Usually I'll come up with the music and then I'll shape the words," he says. Some are inspired by literature—Dylan Thomas, James Joyce. Sometimes they're political—volunteering with Tucson's No More Deaths for four years inspired some lyrics. But Barrett aims for subtlety, nothing preachy.

When he's not jamming, Barret is building or repairing ("E-mail me if you ever need a handyman!" he says, shivertail@gmail.com). If you've been to Plush since its renovation, you might have rested your cocktail on one of his latest commissions—the glass embedded bar. The Possibles' next gig is May 19th at the Red Room (100 East Congress Street).

Cyril plays at the CSA on Tuesdays, 6:00 to 7:00 PM

Caramelized Fennel and Onion Pasta

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA



This is the recipe from the CSA cooking demo a couple weeks ago. If you want to add protein to the dish, Italian sausage or sardines are great options to compliment the fennel. The fennel and onion mixture caramelizes in the time it takes to bring water to a boil and cook the pasta al dente.

1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
1 large or 2 medium bulbs fennel, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 pound pasta, preferably penne
Zest from one lemon, plus juice of 1/2 lemon
Salt and pepper to taste
Fennel fronds, roughly chopped, to garnish

Put a large pot of salted water on to boil, for pasta. In a large skillet, heat oil over medium high heat. Stir in onion and fennel and reduce heat to medium. Continue cooking, stirring occasionally. When pasta is almost cooked through, fennel mixture should be turning a nice golden brown. Drain al dente pasta, reserving 1/2 cup of pasta water. Add pasta and water to skillet with fennel mixture. Add lemon zest and juice and chopped fennel fronds. Stir well. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve garnishes with additional fennel fronds.

Carrot Salad (or Dip)-new

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

One of our Tuesday volunteers, Dana, has found some really interesting ways to use our abundance of carrots. This is one of the recipes she found and tweaked to fit our CSA produce. Serve this dish as a salad, or puree it to serve as a dip. Use half parsnips in this dish, if you like.

5-6 large carrots
1/4 cup fresh grapefruit juice
2 garlic clove, minced
2 teaspoons cumin
Cayenne pepper, to taste
Salt, to taste
1/4 cup olive oil
Large handful of parsley, chopped

Slice carrots into coins and cook in simmering water for about 3-5 minutes, until tender. Drain. Whisk together citrus juice with garlic, a pinch of salt and spices. While whisking, slowly drizzle in olive oil, to emulsify. Add parsley and pour over carrots, stirring well to coat. Taste and add more salt if desired. Serve garnished with parsley sprig.

Spicy Grapefruit and Fennel Salad

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Regular canned olives won't work well in this recipe. If you don't have good quality, oil cured black olives, just omit them. The salad will still be delicious. For a more substantial salad, add slices of ripe avocado, too.

2 grapefruit, peeled, segmented and chopped into bite size pieces
1 large bulb fennel, very thinly sliced
1/4 small yellow onion, thinly sliced
6-8 oil cured black olives, pitted and roughly chopped
Red chile flakes, to taste
Olive oil, drizzle
Salt and fresh cracked pepper, to taste
Feta cheese, to taste

Toss together grapefruit, fennel, onion and olives. Dress with chile flakes, salt and pepper and a drizzle of olive oil. Let sit for at least 30 minutes. Garnish with crumbled feta cheese before serving.

Parsnips, Carrots and Potatoes with Curry Sauce

Steamed spring time vegetables covered with a quick and classic French béchamel sauce make an easy and delicious side dish. The technique for making this sauce is fairly straightforward and there is plenty of room for variation.

2 tablespoons butter (or oil)
About 2 tablespoons flour
1 cup liquid (milk, cream or soy milk, or stock)

Melt the butter in a heavy bottom sauce pan over low heat. Sprinkle in flour and stir to combine. Cook, stirring, for about 3 minutes. Slowly add liquid, stirring quickly with a wire whisk or fork. Add any additional ingredients and stir until sauce is thick and smooth. Add more liquid if the béchamel becomes too thick. Remove from heat and season with salt to taste.

Use this béchamel as a base for the following dish:

Cut parsnips, carrots and potatoes into bite size chunks and steam until tender. Prepare basic béchamel sauce, adding 1 teaspoon Garam Masala or Curry powder after liquid is stirred in. Pour sauce over steamed veggies and serve.