

COOKING FRESH

BY DAVA PARR

SUMMER IN THE ROCKIES

Aaahhh summertime. Let the bounty begin! The fields will produce row after row of wondrous vine and sun-ripened vegetables and fruits during this rewarding season of abundance. Summer is the time for impatience while waiting to taste each new offering and indulge on them until we are sated, knowing it won't taste that good again for another year.

The tomato vines will bow to the ground from heaviness, and the melon patch will threaten to overtake the garden like it does every year, tendrils pulling their way across the earth. The green beans will yield repeatedly, until every farm worker dreams of ripping the harvest-laborious plant out of the ground and hiding it in the compost pile.

Sweet corn will sway in the breeze and whisper for you to peel back its husks, light a moonlight fire and grab some butter. Just when you think it can't get any better, the peaches start begging for you to pick them and sample their sweet flavor.

Life is good in the summer amidst the certainty of ripening fruits and vegetables. Life is perfect when that great bounty of food arrives! 🌿

FRESH HEIRLOOM TOMATO AND CHEVRE PASTA

Courtesy of Dava Parr, Fresh & Wyld

Serves 3 or 4

This dish calls for fresh, vine and sun-ripened tomatoes. The tomatoes are the main flavor here with a little fresh garlic and basil competing for favoritism. In this recipe less is best, so I resist throwing in lots of other vegetables, even though my garden and fridge are brimming with them. If I can't stop myself, I'll add a generous handful of arugula. I also think this is wonderful with grilled chicken.

4 servings of penne pasta
2 big, organic, fresh, ripe tomatoes (a variety of colors of heirloom's are nice)
Sea salt and pepper
2 cloves garlic
Generous pour of extra virgin olive oil
2 ounces of chevre or blue cheese, crumbled
A handful of arugula

Prepare pasta and set aside, keeping hot. Chop tomatoes, add salt and pepper and put into a separate bowl. Drain some of the tomato liquid into a serving bowl. Crush garlic and add to tomato liquid in serving bowl. Drizzle olive oil into tomato liquid while whisking to slightly emulsify. Add pasta, cheese, arugula and tomatoes. Toss a few times and serve.



JUNE

Peas: Shell, Sugar Snaps, Snow
Baby Vegetables
Spring Turnips
Fava Beans
Strawberries
Cilantro
Parsley
Dill
Basil
Salad Greens
Kale
Chard
Head Lettuce
Baby Onions
Carrots
Beets

JULY

Asian Braising Greens
Peas: Shell, Sugar Snaps, Snow
Kale
Chard
Collards
Cabbage
Squash Blossoms
Summer Squash
New Potatoes
Cucumbers
Eggplant
Tomatoes
Green Beans
Fava Beans
Scallions
Cherries
Apricots
Peaches
Garlic
Beets
Carrots
Jalapeños
Leeks
Corn

AUGUST

Raspberries
 Blackberries
 Peaches
 Apples
 Pears
 Nectarines
 Plums
 Squash Blossoms
 New Potatoes
 Cucumbers
 Summer Squash
 Eggplant
 Tomatoes
 Green Beans
 Garlic
 Asian Braising
 Greens
 Kale
 Chard
 Collards
 Jalapeños
 Corn
 Hot Chilies
 Sweet Peppers
 Okra
 Leeks
 Broccoli
 Cauliflower
 Basil
 Thyme
 Rosemary
 Sage
 Parsley
 Onions
 Beets
 Carrots
 Ground Cherries
 Edamame

SQUASH BLOSSOM RELLENOS

Courtesy of Dava Parr, Fresh & Wyld

Serves 2

This is the epitome of good summer eating, and is a little trouble but it's worth it. One bit of these cheesy delicacies and you will be begging your favorite growers for all their male squash blossoms. I am not sure of the serving size on this one. In wild abandon I could eat all eight blossoms by my lonesome!

8 squash blossoms (those with at least a one inch stem)

1 fire-roasted jalapeno or poblano, cut into strips
 Monterey jack cheese or good melting cheese

¼ cup grape seed oil and olive oil mixed

3 egg whites, whisked

1–2 cups masa harina

Coarse sea salt or kosher salt

Shake gently and open each blossom to look for bugs and bees. Take a slice of jalapeno or poblano followed by a pinkie finger sized chunk of cheese and stuff into blossom. Gently twist tips of flower petals into a tight package around filling. Continue until all blossoms are inspected and stuffed.

Pour oil into a wide, heavy bottomed pan. While oil is heating; roll blossoms in egg whites and dip

one at a time into masa harina. You don't have to heavily coat them, a little goes a long way, and it is nice to crisp up some of the skin without the masa adhering to it. Gently place the blossoms in the oil when it is hot enough, without overcrowding pan. Brown on all sides and remove to a paper lined plate to absorb some of the excess oil. Sprinkle with sea or kosher salt while still hot.

Relleno Sauce

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 onion, chopped

1 clove garlic

1 teaspoon cumin seed

1 teaspoon ground cumin

½ teaspoon crushed red chili flakes

1 teaspoon oregano

4 good sized tomatoes, blanched, seeded and cored

2 cups chicken stock or water

Sea salt and fresh black pepper

Heat pan and add oil. Add onion, garlic, cumin seed and powder, red chili flakes and oregano. Cook for about 5 minutes and add tomatoes. Cook for another 5 minutes or so then add liquid, salt and pepper. Simmer for 30 minutes and puree.

Pour a full ladle of sauce onto individual plates and artfully arrange blossoms in a sunburst.



Borden Farms



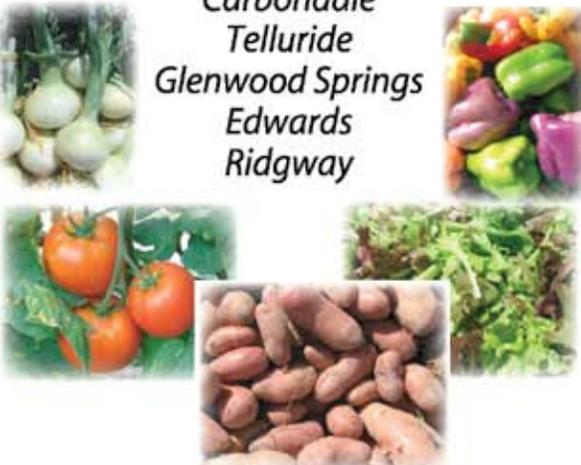
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TUSCAN-STYLE BRAISED GREENS

Courtesy of Dava Parr, Fresh & Wyld

Serves 3 or 4

Preparing kale this way feels a little more summery to me than some of my other kale recipes. Maybe it's the name! Kale grows year round but in the summer it has a stronger flavor. The tang of lemon zest and the sweetness of raisins meld well with the more robust flavor of summer kale.

2 tablespoons pine nuts
Olive oil
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 bunch of kale or other fresh greens, chopped and steamed lightly
2 tablespoons raisins
Crushed red pepper
Zest of 1 lemon
Salt and fresh black pepper
Grated Parmesan cheese

Toast pine nuts in a little olive oil until they begin to golden. Add garlic and kale or other greens. Sauté for a few minutes. Add raisins and sauté another minute. Add red pepper, lemon zest, salt and fresh pepper. Top with grated Parmesan before serving.

PEACH GELATO

Courtesy of Dava Parr, Fresh & Wyld

Serves 4

I created this recipe last year at the end of peach season. It is truly a scrumptious way to enjoy peaches on a hot August day. This year, I am going to have plenty of 3-pound bags of peaches frozen as soon as they start dropping from the trees. This recipe only takes 5 minutes to make and is best eaten right after it is made.

3 pounds frozen peaches, semi-peeled and de-stoned
½ cup raw honey or agave nectar
1 teaspoon lemon juice
½ cup plain organic whole milk yogurt

Put the frozen peach pieces in a food processor with the sweetener and pulse briefly. Add the lemon juice and yogurt and pulse until the mixture is smooth.

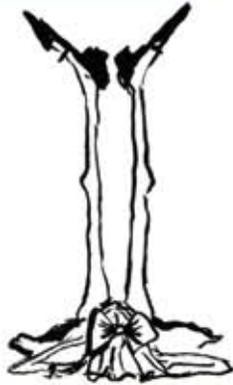
If not serving right away, empty the food processor into a small container and freeze for 20 to 30 minutes before serving. If the gelato freezes solid, simply pulse it briefly again in food processor before serving.

Chef Dava owns Fresh & Wyld Farmhouse and Gardens. She delivers fresh produce and other products locally grown in Paonia and Hotchkiss to homes in the Roaring Fork Valley. You can preview her website, www.freshandwyld.com and order your own bag of summer veggies, sign up for a workshop, farm dinner or to just come stay at the farmhouse.

Bringing the best from wherever it may come!

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the o.g. grenache 2006



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eden valley riesling 2008



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the chronique grenache 2006

their step was light
and they could
feel the ball of each
foot pushing through
the earth down from
the mast they walked...

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COOKING FRESH

PUTTING UP THE BOUNTY

Canning is the best way to preserve the sweet tastes of summer

BY DAVA PARR

Summer harvest can last well into winter if you can take the time to preserve a little of it in the summertime. Canning and drying foods once was mandatory for our ancestors' survival. Our grandmas and great-grandmas knew the simple ways of food preservation intimately when they were growing up.

I am tickled pink at the current resurgence of canning. I really enjoyed sampling the different offerings from proud canners as I made the rounds last summer. I tasted green chili relish and blackberry jam from Ryan Hardy at The Little Nell. I enjoyed pear and ginger conserve from my lovely friend Ana, of the Kampe Foundation, a nonprofit that serves farmers in the Paonia and Hotchkiss areas. From Sarah Hart in Snowmass Village, I tasted the most amazing peach chutney! That lady should slap a label on those chutney jars and let me sell them.

Every year my sister sends me quince paste and walnut-fig conserve. They arrive in a shoebox stuffed with newspapers and cooking questions. I love what she sends me and how she sends them. Each jar lovingly labeled and in an effort to never run out of expensive canning rings, my sister sends her jars to me ringless. I have enjoyed her walnut-fig conserve with everything from brie cheese omelets to grilled quail, and I always smile thinking of how she shared in a meal with me—1,000 miles away in sunny California.

I sometimes try to can like my mom did. She used to go to the farms in Northern California where we lived and come home with a couple of cases of tomatoes or peaches or apples. Then she would go next door and come back with an auntie or a neighbor and a handful of cousins and neighbor kids. Combined with her own three daughters, that would make very short work of three cases of tomatoes. With all the food cleaned and cut, she would stop to make us kids and my Pop our dinner and then we'd all get hustled off to bed. My mom would make a pot of coffee and stay up all night long doing the rest of the work herself. You could hear the pressure cooker hissing and her tuning in her favorite country music station; every so often, the beautiful, sweet smells of blackberry or peach jam would drift into your sleep, causing you to stumble back into consciousness to hear the soft *pop* of another jar sealing.

Guess what? I am kidless. I don't drink coffee. One of my sisters lives in California and the other lives in Arkansas. The only time I was a night owl was in Aspen in the 80's and, believe me, I wasn't thinking about peach jam at 3 a.m.

My first attempts at canning included buying a case or two of fruit only to have them turned into compost. Good intentions aside, 30

pounds of peaches go south fast! Still, though, it is fun to try to put up a lot of food at once like our moms and grandmothers once did. It is a day well-spent getting a few girlfriends and siblings together for a canning party.

I have a great book to recommend to you would-be food preservers. It is called *The Encyclopedia of Country Living* by Carla Emery. It is full of the best advice from canning peaches, making cheese and drying jerky to catching a pig and building a chicken coop. You must have it in your repertoire of foodie books.

I leave you with a few of my preserving tips and invite you to "put up" some of your summer bounty this year.

Buy a case of organic seconds this year from the farmers when they are in season, for delicious smoothies out-of-season. Simply wash fruit, pull out pit or stone, put as many as you want in a bag for each smoothie you anticipate making. Stack in freezer with pride. Remember it is hard to break off chunks of frozen fruit so pick your smoothie size when you are bagging them.

For berries, don't even wash them. Berries, when washed, turn into a frozen mass and make your blender work harder.

When that long-awaited glut of tomatoes arrives, try this nifty trick to preserve them: Wash, core and on the bottom of the tomato, make an "X" with your knife just along the skin. Place into a freezer bag. In the winter pull them out one at a time as you need them for sauces, omelets, soups, salsas, etc., and run them under hot water. The peel will come right off and you will have a summery tasting tomato!

Leave a little dirt on your potatoes when wanting to "over-winter" them. It keeps them from going mushy. Also store them as close to 40 degrees as you can.

To make dried herbs, take fresh herbs and spread them out in a single layer on a cookie sheet. Try to remove the entire stem before you do this. Put the sheet next to a sunny window or a very hot place in your house and let dry for a few days. Next, make pretty labels for the right size of jar you are using and place a funnel over the top. Crumble the herbs into the jar with your fingers. Seal and use. 🌿

Chef Dava owns Fresh & Wyld Farmhouse and Gardens in Paonia. She delivers food regularly to the Roaring Fork Valley and will be doing workshops this summer for those who want to learn the lost art of food preservation. You can log onto her website at www.freshandwyld.com for a summer schedule of workshops.

