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The weekly newsletter of Stone's Throw CSA
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A Roasting Primer

Roasting veggies seems to be gaining in popularity, and many of the fall veggies benefit from this cooking method. The following is excerpted from <http://www.gigitrattoria.com/reviews.html>

By Laura Pensiero, RD

A chef's guide to enhancing the flavors of the harvest's vegetables

The point of roasting vegetables is to evaporate much of the water, concentrating the flavor and caramelizing the natural sugars.

A golden exterior and tender moist interior is the benchmark for properly roasted vegetables. If the vegetable is somewhat starchy (eg, potatoes, parsnips, sweet potatoes) some crisping is desired. When the process goes wrong, usually due to overcrowding the pan or too low an oven temperature, the vegetables end up steaming in their own liquid—no crisping, no browning, no concentration of flavor.

1) High, dry heat is required. An oven temperature of approximately 450° F is particularly important during the first 15 minutes of roasting. If the vegetables require further cooking, reduce the temperature to 375° to 400° to continue cooking without overbrowning.

2) Think about how long each vegetable takes to cook and cut into pieces accordingly. For roasted potatoes, peppers, and onions, it is best to cut the quick-cooking peppers into large pieces, the onions into quarters if medium size—eighths if large—and the potatoes in 1- to 2-inch pieces.

3) Use a roasting pan with low sides that is large enough to hold the vegetables in one layer. Stacking or layering will cause steaming.

4) Do not stir vegetables during the first 10 to 15 minutes of roasting. Gently stir or shake the pan after they are well seared to help evenly brown.

5) If using vegetables that require longer cooking times (potatoes, rutabaga, turnips), add garlic cloves and herbs during the last 15 minutes of roasting to prevent burning and bitterness.

Farm updates

In a moment that embodied the spirit of Stone's Throw, a recent caller to **Jade Hill Farmstead**, was surprised to hear the voice of Katherine Anderson instead of Jane LaForce. Katherine was visiting for the day to assist with Jade Hill's fall clean-up during this glorious stretch of Indian summer. It shouldn't have been a surprise; after all, Stone's Throw is a community of growers as well as consumers. Katherine took a break from building compost piles to share news that materials for a new greenhouse were delivered to **Sweet Birch Farm**. Once built, it will enable the growth of winter crops. She expects to harvest Swiss chard next week from her (so far) frost-free fields.

Seasonal preparations are also underway at **Silvermine Farm**. Martha Cole reported: "This weekend a series of volunteers helped put some of the fields to bed. We took down the tomato supports, pulled the dead plant material out and removed the black plastic. The last of the squash and the ripest pumpkins were harvested. I also planted cover crops for the winter on about half of the acreage used this summer and spent a wonderful moonlit evening harrowing in the now-empty squash field.

"The beets and carrots continue to gain in size while the eggplants mock me with their unwillingness to grow," she lamented. "The last of the potatoes should be harvested this week but the pepper plants look as if they will produce steadily until a killing frost, which if the weather forecast holds true could be next weekend. Either way, this week's share should include potatoes, winter squash/sugar pumpkins, peppers, kale, rutabagas and hopefully a more adequate supply of beans and beets. The carrots will be harvested eventually, along with a crop of Swiss chard that both Kat and I are thinking will be ready for distribution week following this.

"I hope to get my garlic planted near the end of this week, along with some overwintering carrots, beets and scallions. I've never planted overwintering crops before, and am hoping that they will give us an early crop next spring to fill the early season share boxes," she continued. "That's pretty much it. Except to say a big thanks for the help I got this weekend from volunteers. It wasn't easy work - rather gross and stinky in the midst of the rotting tomatoes, and physically demanding - but these shareholders kept at it until the job was done."



Harvest Dinner guests enjoy the good food and kids activities as Martha Cole addresses the group.



Recipes

Roasted Delicata Squash

By Kim Carlson culinate.com

A delicata squash tip—slice bite-sized pieces to roast.

I used to follow the same routine for delicata squash that I followed for most winter squash: cut one in half, scrape out the seeds, roast it, then scoop the flesh from the skin and eat it. This technique was a little cumbersome, but because I love the sweet flavor of this winter squash, I went along for years thinking it was fine.

Then I learned a trick from the clever people at Tastebud Farm: Cut the squash lengthwise into quarters, scrape out the seeds, then slice the squash into bite-sized, moon-shaped pieces, about 1/3 inch thick each.

You can roast these in a 425-degree oven for 15 to 20 minutes, turning once (my favorite), or sauté them like zucchini.

When it's well cooked, the delicata skin is easy to eat — and tasty too.

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The following three recipes are from Barbara Kingsolver's wonderful book *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*, a funny and inspiring account of her family's adventures eating only local foods for one year. <http://www.animalvegetablemiracle.com>

Braised Winter Squash

thanks to Deborah Madison, *Local Flavors*

2 lbs. winter squash, peeled, halved and sliced into 1/2 inch rounds

2 tbs. butter

2 cups apple cider

1 tsp. salt

Rosemary and pepper to taste

Melt butter in skillet with rosemary, after a few minutes add the squash, salt and cider. You may need to add some additional cider (or water), enough to cover the squash. Bring

to a boil and braise for 20 minutes or until tender. At this point the juice should be reduced to a glaze. If not, raise heat for a few minutes until excess liquid evaporates. Add pepper and a splash of balsamic vinegar if you like.

Butternut Bean Soup

(serves 4)

1½ cups dried white beans, soaked overnight and drained

3 medium portabella mushroom caps, sliced (optional)

6 garlic cloves, finely chopped

1 tbs. thyme

1 tbs. sage

4 tsp. rosemary

Combine beans and spices in a large sauce pan, add water to cover amply, simmer for 30 to 40 minutes, until beans are tender and most water has cooked off. Add mushrooms toward the end.

2 butternut or hubbard squash, halved lengthwise and seeded

olive oil

While beans are cooking, drizzle a large roasting pan with olive oil and arrange squash skin-side-down. Cook at 400 for about 40 minutes, until fully tender when pierced with a fork. Remove from oven and serve each half squash filled with a generous scoop of bean soup.

Veggie Frittata

Olive oil for pan

8 Eggs

½ cup milk

Preheat oven to "broil"

Beat eggs and milk together, then pour into oiled, oven-proof skillet over medium heat.

Chopped kale, broccoli, asparagus or spinach—depending on the season

Salt and pepper to taste

Feta or other cheese (optional)

Promptly add vegetables and stir evenly into egg mixture. At this point you can also add feta or other cheeses. Cook on low without stirring until eggs are mostly set, then transfer to oven and broil 2-4 minutes, until lightly golden on top. Cool to set before serving.

Maple Pumpkin Polenta

<http://www.gigitrattoria.com/>

This Autumn version of polenta is made from ground cornmeal (a whole grain), pumpkin puree and maple syrup. At Gigi Trattoria it accompanies our braised lamb shank and is also a popular side dish.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

1 garlic clove, minced

1 ½ teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary

pinch hot chili flakes

1 quart milk

2 cups water

1 ½ teaspoons Kosher salt

1 ½ cups finely ground yellow cornmeal

1 cup pumpkin puree (boiled, drained and pureed or 100% natural canned pumpkin)

2 tablespoons maples syrup

½ cup grated Parmigiano Reggiano

1 tablespoon butter

In a medium-size saucepan heat the olive oil, garlic, rosemary and chili flakes over medium heat. When the garlic just begins to brown, add the milk, water and salt. Bring the mixture to a low boil, reduce the heat to simmer, and gradually whisk in the cornmeal; add a small amount at a time, stirring with each addition to prevent clumping. Reduce the heat to low and cook the polenta, stirring often, until the cornmeal is creamy and pulling away from the sides of the pan, about 25 minutes. Stir in the pumpkin puree and maple syrup, cook another minute or two, then remove from the heat and stir in the Parmigiano Reggiano and the butter. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper, if necessary.

Did you attend the Harvest Dinner?

Please share your recipe with the group! Email to katherine.anderson@verizon.net or visit <http://stonesthrowcsa.wordpress.com/2008/10/09/harvest-dinner-wrapup/>