



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Summer 2019

Harvest lists are online.

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Find many more recipes on our website.

Reusable Bags

Thanks to some very kind donations, we now have a number of reusable bags in the "I Forgot My Bag" chest. If you take one to use, please bring it back clean for another member to use. Thank you!

Ice Packs for Grabs

We have ice packs left over from shipments that we've received over the last year. If you're in need of ice packs to help transport cold food, we're more than happy to pass them on in an effort to reduce, **reuse**, and recycle!

Free Compost

One of our generous CSA members is offering free compost made right on her own property with horse manure and food scraps. Rich in nutrients and organic materials, this compost is sure to make your plants happy!

If you're interested in picking up some compost from Benita, please send her an email at benitag@cox.net.

Harvesting and Processing Prickly Pears



No, we don't have prickly pear fruits in our shares, but we have them all around us: indeed, it is the time of year for the desert to yield its magenta magic and for us to enjoy this cooling drink! Making prickly pear juice is easy once you know how to do it, and it is incredibly rewarding. The juice, usually with additional sweetening, can be added to refreshing lemonades, margaritas and martinis, and it can be turned into jellies, sorbets, slosies, paletas (popsicles) and raspados (shaved ice snowcones). We like Desert Harvesters' method for its ease and simplicity (www.DesertHarvesters.org).

HARVEST FRUIT: Look for prickly pear fruits, or tunas as they're called in Spanish, that are dark red or purple in color. August and September tend to be the season in Tucson. Using tongs, simply pluck the fruit from the nopal pad. They should come off easily. The fine hairs on the surfaces of both the fruit and the pads are called glochids—they stick and prick, so you might consider wearing gloves as well. Though the cactus is abundant, be sure to leave ample fruit for wildlife and a new generation of cactus.

PROCESS FRUIT: To process, first wash the fruit by placing it in a sink full of cool water and swishing it around with a large spoon. Then place whole fruits, glochids and all, into a blender or food processor. Blend to make a slurry. Strain the slurry through a pillow case, fine mesh strainer or a colander lined with cloth. We recommend using a clean, old t-shirt or pillowcase rather than cheese cloth. Use a spoon to press the juice from the seeds and skins. Let the strained juice settle. Gently pour the juice off the top, leaving most of the sediment behind. Freeze prickly pear juice in ice cube trays, then transfer to airtight freezer storage bags.

Alternatively, you can put whole prickly pear fruits in the freezer. To thaw and process later, line a colander with a clean pillowcase or t-shirt and place over a bucket or large bowl. Place frozen fruits in the colander and allow to defrost (2-5 hours). Press on fruits with a wooden spoon as they soften to push juice through.

DRINK FRUIT JUICE: Prickly Pear fruit is a deliciously refreshing fruit celebrated for its vibrant magenta color, unique flavor, and cooling properties. Prickly pear juice can be diluted with water ~ added to lemonade or other drinks to make a refreshing beverage. Or, use it to make regional favorites: syrup (to drizzle on pancakes or ice cream or flavor/color margaritas) and jelly (great on toast)!

NOTE: Prickly pear juice has a cooling effect for some people. If you're a person who is sensitive to it, a large quantity of non-diluted raw juice may cause chills and body aches. (We recently heard from some folks who had a bad reaction from drinking about a half cup of juice diluted in water.) Drinking a few glasses of lemonade with a splash of prickly pear juice is absolutely fine and will give you the cooling effect you're seeking in the dog days of August and the still-here September summer. Just start with small quantities and increase in small increments to find the amount that is right for you!

RECIPES

Nopalitos and Bratwurst with Rice Pilaf

Philippe, Tucson CSA

If nopales put you off because of their slight sliminess, mixing them with cooked rice will resolve the problem. This is a nice one-pot dish that can be eaten hot or at room temperature. Instead of bratwurst, you can use Italian sausage, or if you prefer the dish to be vegetarian, you can use 2-3 cups cooked beans. It's also a good way to use leftover rice – use 4 cups of cooked rice.

1 lb bratwursts (about 4 sausages), or 2-3 cups of cooked beans
2 nopales
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup uncooked rice
2 cups stock or water
1/2 tablespoon herbs (use herb mix of your choice, e.g. herbes de Provence, oregano and thyme, Italian herbs)
Salt and pepper
Olive oil

Heat some oil in large skillet over medium heat. Sauté onions until translucent (about 5 minutes). Add rice, herbs and salt and pepper to taste. Stir until rice is well coated and hot, about 3 minutes (the rice should start smelling a little nutty but should not burn). Add garlic and stir for another couple minutes. Add stock, cover, and bring back to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Turn off heat and let sit for another 10 minutes. Coat both sides of the de-spined nopales with olive oil. On a high heat grill (about 400), grill bratwurst and nopales for about 5 minutes on each side. Nopales should be slightly charred. Slice the nopales in nail-sized cubes or diamonds. Slice the bratwurst in thin slices. Mix rice, nopales and bratwurst.

Creamy Corn Soup, Hot or Cold

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

Four cobs corn, kernels scraped off and cobs reserved
Two small to medium Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 1” pieces
Two medium to large Little Sweetie onions, about 1/2 cup when sliced vertically
2 cups vegetable or chicken stock, or water
Salt and pepper
Cayenne or Ancho chile powder to taste (start with 1/4 teaspoon and adjust)
1/4 cup half and half, or soy yogurt

Place the corn kernels, cobs, potatoes, and onion in a 4 quart saucepan and cover with the broth or water. Bring to a boil, and let simmer for 30 minutes. Remove the cobs, allow to cool slightly, then blend in a blender in batches. To make this a bit more fancy, you can then put the soup through a food mill or strain it to remove the hulls of the corn kernels. Then season it and add half and half or soy yogurt, and serve chilled. Squash blossoms make a dramatic garnish. I chose to serve it hot, and left it in its natural state. I sprinkled a little Ancho chile powder on top.

Spanish Tortilla

Lissa Gibbs, Tucson CSA

This makes a satisfying light lunch or dinner. Add strips of roasted chiles in the mix if you like!

2 tablespoons of olive oil
1 medium sized onion, peeled, halved, and thinly sliced crosswise
2 pounds potatoes, peeled and sliced into 1/8 inch thick rounds
3/4 teaspoon of salt
1/2 teaspoon of pepper
1/3 cup of water
5 large organic and humanely produced eggs

Heat olive oil over medium high heat in 10-12 inch nonstick ovenproof frying pan. Add onion and stir often until limp (5 mins). Add potatoes, 1/2 tsp salt and 1/4 tsp pepper. Add water and bring to boil; reduce heat to medium, cover, and cook until potatoes are tender (10 mins). If any liquid remains, boil off uncovered. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, beat eggs with a generous pinch of salt and pepper. Add potato mixture and coat gently. Place unwashed frying pan over medium high heat and pour egg/potato mixture into it. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook until eggs begin to set and bottom is lightly browned (5-8 mins). Transfer pan to oven and broil the “tortilla” about 6 inches from heat until top is set (3-5 mins). Run a spatula between the tortilla and pan to loosen and invert tortilla onto plate. Cut into wedges and serve warm or at room temperature.

Quick Tortilla Soup

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This recipe is easy and quick, just remember to remove the skins and seeds and veins from the green chiles before using.

4 cups broth
1-4 roasted chiles, diced
3 tomatoes, roughly chopped
1 onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 tablespoon oil
Salt and pepper to taste
Garnish with tortilla chips and any combination of cheese, avocado, shredded cooked chicken lime wedges and sour cream

In a large pot, heat one tablespoon of oil and sauté chiles, tomatoes, onions and garlic. Cook about 5 minutes then add broth, bring to a boil and cook for 15 minutes. Serve in individual bowls and let each person add their own garnish.