



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 203 ~ August 24, 2009 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

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Summer Season Ends

Thanks to all CSA members who made it through the hot summer with us. Desert farming in the summer months isn't easy, but the rewards are so appreciated!

Roasting Chiles at Home

The green chiles in your share won't always come pre-roasted. You can use them "raw" or

roast your own using an oven broiler, an outdoor grill, or, if you're patient and only doing one or two, the regular old gas burner.

In the broiler: Arrange chiles on a cookie sheet (some people use foil for easier clean up). Turn chiles so their skins blacken evenly.

On the grill: Arrange chiles on a pre-heated grill and periodically turn with tongs so they blacken and char evenly.

On the gas burner: Using tongs hold one chile over the gas flame, turning it until charred evenly.

After broiling or grilling, place hot chiles in a paper bag. This allows the chiles to continue steaming, which will help loosen their skins. Once cooled, peel chiles and remove seeds, and eat! YUM! There are several recipes on the website too.

Newsletter Editor

Kimi Eisele

FRUIT WATERS TO COOL YOU THROUGH THE END OF SUMMER

by Sallie Marston, CSA member

Commercial fruit waters have flooded supermarket shelves, showing up even in corner convenience stores. But the fruit waters available in stores don't compare to the ones you can make at home which are refreshing and much more satisfying to drink than anything made by Glacéau, which pioneered vitaminwater and smartwater and has recently introduced an extensive line of fruitwater. The recipes in this series come from Audiger's *La Maison Reglee*, a French cookbook written in 1692, and updated by Jane Grigson in her *Fruit Book*. They're delightful!



Pear, peach and apricot waters: *Cut up 4-8 fruits fairly small—include peel, core and all with pears, but no stones. Put them in 2 1/2 cups of water and bring slowly to boiling point and allow to boil fully (about 5 min). Remove the pan from heat and stir in 1/3 - 2/3 cup sugar. Leave to cool. Strain and chill.*

Pomegranate Water

The pomegranate tree in our yard is getting heavy with fruit, so much so that in the last monsoon storm a part of its multi-branching trunk was blown over. We were able to set it right with ropes and stabilizers and it's rewarded us with lots and lots of nearly ripe fruit. Pomegranate has become a very stylish fruit these days prized for its high nutritional value and health benefits, from lowering blood pressure to minimizing the oxidizing of LDL (bad cholesterol). With the pomegranate season nearly fully upon us, here's a nice way to drink the benefits!

When preparing pomegranates remember that their juice stains like the dickens. The seeds are the essence of this fruit and you need to extract them without bringing along the bitter pith. So cut the crown or calyx off the top and lightly score the rind in several places. Then break the sections apart, separating the seeds from the membranes. To juice the pomegranate, squeeze the seeds over a sieve and discard.

Add the juice of 2 or 3 pomegranates to 2 1/2 cups of water and bring to a boil, letting boil for 5 min. Remove the pan from the heat and add 1/2 to 2/3 cup of sugar. Leave to cool. Then strain and chill.

Strawberry Water

This is the most popular of the fruit waters in the current craze. I include it in the series, though strawberries are past their season now and the ones in the store are flavorless. When spring comes again, try this recipe with succulent, fresh strawberries.

Process or liquidize 1 lb. of strawberries with 2 1/2 cups of water, 1/3 - 2/3 cup of sugar and the juice of a lemon. Leave to infuse for at least 15 minutes then strain into a pitcher and chill. You can serve this concoction with a little soda water for a really refreshing drink.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Try **cucumber water** for a more savory-flavored water. *Add 1 sliced and peeled cucumber to 1 1/2 to 2 liters of water and let sit in the fridge overnight. You can also add mint and lemon!*

And for an extra special taste, add chopped **basil** to your fruit waters (especially strawberry!).

Sweet Potato Patties-new

Wendy McCrady, Tucson CSA

1 cup cooked and mashed sweet potato
1 cup leftover sushi rice (short-grain white rice seasoned with seasoned rice vinegar)
1 tablespoon finely chopped roasted peanuts
1 teaspoon vegetarian "fish" sauce (Nuoc Mam Chay in Asian food stores - contains no fish)
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 tablespoon minced cilantro
1 large basil leaf, minced
2 tablespoons whole wheat flour

Mix everything together thoroughly. Form into balls and flatten into patties. Cook until lightly browned on each side. I put mine in a George Foreman grill with a deep baking plate (and made the patties thin enough so the top wouldn't stick to them), but they could probably be cooked in a nonstick skillet or baked in the oven, flipping midway during the cooking. On the grill, they took about 7-8 minutes per side. Serve with Sriracha sauce.

Braised Dijon Cucumbers-new

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

The new *Julie and Julia* movie, apparently, has people raving about a French braised cucumber recipe. Here is an adaptation with Dijon mustard in it. If you prefer something more like the original, just omit the Dijon.

1 cucumber, peeled and seeded
1 small sweet onion, minced
2 teaspoons white wine vinegar
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 small pat butter
1 drizzle olive oil
1 teaspoon dried tarragon or dill (optional)
Salt and pepper, to taste

Cut the cucumber in half, lengthwise, then cut each half into three long strips. Cut strips into 1-inch pieces. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium high heat and add cucumbers and onion. Cook, tossing or stirring frequently, for about 4 minutes, until cucumbers are slightly browned. Stir together mustard and vinegar and pour over cucumbers. Add butter and herbs, if using. Toss well to coat, turn heat to low and cover. Cook about 10 more minutes. The juice from the cucumbers should help them steam, but if needed, add a bit of water to keep them from burning or sticking. When tender, sprinkle with salt and pepper. Serve warm.

Caramelized Onions

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Caramelizing onions makes them incredibly sweet and delicious. It is a great way to use up a backlog of onions, as they reduce in size greatly. Use the onions to top burgers, casseroles or pasta.

2-3 cups thinly sliced onions
2 tablespoons oil
1 teaspoon salt

Heat oil over medium heat and add onions, stirring well to coat. Once onions begin to brown reduce heat to medium low and cook, stirring often, until onions are nicely browned. Add salt and a splash of balsamic vinegar if desired.

Chipotle Mashed Sweet Potatoes

Chad Weiler, TCSA

4 medium sized sweet potatoes or 2 large cut into cubes
4 oz of plain goat cheese
1-2 chipotle chiles in adobo chopped finely (depends on your heat needs)
2 teaspoons of the adobo sauce
approx. 2 tablespoons butter
1/4 cup of milk

Boil the potatoes in salted water until fork tender and drain. Place potatoes and all of the ingredients in a bowl and mash with a potato masher or electric mixer. Season with salt and pepper and add more milk if consistency is not to what you desire. The sweetness of the potatoes, the heat/smokiness from the chiles, and the tang from the goat cheese are wonderful. I usually leave the potato skins on.

Variations: Instead of using plain goat cheese and the chipotle chiles you can substitute the chipotle goat cheese.

Individual Pear Crisps

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Use this recipe if you don't have enough fruit to make a whole cobbler or crisp. Serve with vanilla yogurt or a scoop of ice cream.

1 basket pears, washed, cored and chopped
1 slice lemon
1 tablespoon sugar or brown sugar (optional)
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1 handful granola
1 thin slice butter

Melt one slice of butter and sugar in a small saucepan over medium heat. Add cut fruit, a squeeze of lemon juice and the cinnamon. Cook for about 3 minutes, until fruit is cooked through and meltingly tender. Place in one or two bowls and top with granola and yogurt or ice cream. Serve hot.