



## A Place on Earth CSA Notes

August 19-22, 2020

**In your share this week:** Tomatillos; Cantaloupe; Eggplant; Sweet Peppers; Garlic; Onions; Cucumber; Squash/Zucchini; Tomatoes; Cherry Tomatoes; Kale; Basil

**Tomatillos:** Wow! Something new to learn! Being a southern rural farm girl, I did not run across tomatillos in my farm life until my dad raised something he called “husk tomatoes.”\* We did not know what to do with them, but now find many South-of-the-Border recipes using these little green tomato-like fruits. A Salsa Verde is amazingly easy to make, and mine did not come with husks. The recipe below calls for a pound, so I adjusted the recipe to call it about a half pound and reduced the water to  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 cup. This is another Allrecipes.com recipe by Amoli.

\*My dad loved to grow vegetables for our large family of 10 kids, and Mother was a good cook, but was not always enthusiastic about trying something she thought was too exotic. Like tomatillos, kohlrabi, or salsify. Or even broccoli, until it became so trendy back in the 1950's that she ended up serving it at every potluck, overcooked and smothered in cheese. But tomatillos, not so much!

### Salsa Verde

1-pound tomatillos, husks removed  
½ cup finely chopped onion  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 serrano chili pepper, minced (Or minced jalapeno, to taste)  
2 tablespoons chopped cilantro  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano (or 1 teaspoon, dried)  
½ teaspoon cumin  
1 teaspoon salt, or to taste.  
1 ½ to 2 cups water

Add all ingredients to a saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer and cook until tomatillos are soft, about 15 minutes. Process with an immersion blender or regular blender until pureed to the consistency desired.

Recipe adapted from [www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com).

**Benedictine:** This week my friend Kirby Adams offered a recipe in her Courier-Journal column about Derby, which will (apparently) occur in September instead of May. This recipe is for Benedictine, comes from the book, "[Which Fork Do I Use with My Bourbon?](#)" By Peggy Noe Stevens and Susan Reigler. It's pretty easy, but don't be tempted to put grated cucumbers in the cream cheese, or you'll have a mess. Follow the directions! And of course, you have onions and cucumbers in your share for the tasty part.

### **Benedictine**

3 tablespoons cucumber juice  
1 tablespoon onion juice  
8 ounces cream cheese, softened  
1 teaspoon salt  
A few grains cayenne pepper  
2 drops green food color

To obtain the juice, peel and grate a cucumber, wrap it in a clean dish towel, and squeeze the juice into a bowl. Discard the pulp. Do the same thing with the onion. Mix all ingredients with a fork until well blended. Do not use a blender; it will make the spread too runny.

\*My mother used this spread on little white sandwiches that had the crusts removed, cut into triangles. I don't remove crusts and spread it on whole wheat bread.

**Squash and More Squash!** I often grate extra summer squash—yellow, zucchini, and others—to make zucchini bread later. This week I saw a recipe for Zucchini Brownies in my friend, Mac Stone's website for Elmwood Stock Farm, and checked out the blog from where he and Ann found the recipe: [www.scalingbackblog.com](http://www.scalingbackblog.com). ( a website for folks who have allergies and food sensitivities.)

I adapted it for folks who use eggs and nuts and made a batch to make sure they were as delicious as they seemed, and indeed, they are. The zucchini—or yellow squash, if you prefer—makes the brownies moist, mimicking the boatload of fat in most brownie recipes, and the chocolate chips embedded in the brownies remind you of frosting. It's well worth the few minutes it takes to make a batch. I stored mine in the fridge to keep them fresh, which has worked perfectly. If you are a chocolate lover, I hope you will try them; my guests have loved them!

### **Chocolate Zucchini Brownies**

1 cup all-purpose flour (I substitute half of the flour with whole wheat pastry flour)  
1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
1½ teaspoons baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/3 cup melted butter  
2 eggs  
1 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 cups shredded zucchini or summer squash (about 1/2 lb.)  
1/3 cup chopped walnuts or pecans  
1½ cups dark chocolate chips  
1/2 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F, with a rack in the center of the oven.  
Spray or coat 8x8 square baking pan.

In a medium bowl, sift the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt.  
In a large bowl, add butter, sugar, vanilla extract, zucchini, and eggs to a large bowl, and stir well to combine. Add dry ingredients to wet and stir well until you get a nice batter. Add chocolate chips and nuts; mix to incorporate.  
Pour batter into the prepared pan.

Bake for 30 to 40 minutes, or until the center is just set and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out relatively clean. Allow to cool completely before slicing.

Beaucoup Basil! Yes, we've received lots of basil, and I hope you have been making pesto. My freezer is getting filled with little containers of pesto. Here's another idea for basil, and we have several of the ingredients used in this appetizer:

### **Avocado Basil Cucumber Bites**

1 ripe avocado, peeled and pitted  
½ cup fresh basil leaves  
1 tablespoon lime juice  
1 clove garlic, minced  
¼ teaspoon salt  
1 cucumber, cut into ¼" slices  
1 plum tomato, cut into ¼" slices  
1 tablespoon plain yogurt, or to taste  
A pinch of pepper, or to taste

Blend avocado, basil, lime juice, garlic, salt, and pepper together in a food processor or blender until smooth. Spread avocado mixture onto each cucumber slice and top with a tomato slice or even a whole cherry tomato and yogurt. It can also be used on crackers.

Please send me your favorite recipe so everyone can share your culinary skills.

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