



A Place on Earth CSA Notes 093020

In your share this week:

Head Lettuce or Bok Choy or Tatsoi; Sweet Potatoes; Acorn Squash; Yellow Wax Beans; Radishes; Potatoes; Eggplant; Garlic; Onions; Tomatoes; Cherry Tomatoes; Kale; Basil; Parsley

Potato recipes abound, but this is a perennial one that I often take to potlucks. It is the perfect solution for tiny potatoes like we have been receiving. Yes, I have offered it a couple of times through the years, but you may not have that recipe handy. Here's one of the reasons I like it: I have a few cheap beers on hand that are not crowd pleasers, but they work just fine for this recipe, so I can save the good stuff for drinking. :~)

Beer Braised Potatoes

2 pounds of potatoes
3 tablespoons olive (or other) oil
2 cups of beer (or one bottle/can)
Salt and pepper
1 cup grated cheddar
1 tablespoon corn starch or 2 tablespoons flour
1 tablespoon grated or powdered horseradish
Chopped parsley for garnish, optional

Preparation:

1. Peel the potatoes and cut them into chunks.
2. Heat the oil in a large pot to medium-high and add the potatoes. Sprinkle with some salt and pepper.
3. Cook the potatoes for about ten minutes or until they begin to turn golden.
4. Add the beer or other liquid and bring to a boil. Once boil is reached, turn the heat down to medium-low and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes. Stir the potatoes occasionally or they could stick to the pot.
5. Toss grated cheddar and corn starch (or flour) together. Then stir it into the mixture along with the grated horseradish. Continue stirring until the cheese melts, and top it with a parsley garnish, optional. Serves 4.

Nearing the last of the tomatoes: If you have 1 ¼ pounds of tomatoes left—including cherry tomatoes and Romas—you might enjoy making this very interesting soup that I found in “Easy Indian Cookbook” by Manju Malhi, which I found at the Just Creations store on Frankfort Ave..

The recipe is adapted from that book. My adaptation included using whatever size I had on hand, following the directions below.

Tamater Shorba (Indian Tomato Soup)

2 tablespoons peanut oil (or a neutral oil)
9 black peppercorns
2 bay leaves
1 cinnamon stick
2 garlic cloves, chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 ¼ pounds tomatoes, chopped
1 one-inch piece of ginger root, peeled and grated
2 teaspoons sugar
½ teaspoon salt
Pinch of chili powder, optional
Pinch of freshly ground pepper

1. Bring 3 ½ cups water to a boil. Heat the oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Add the peppercorns, bay leaves and cinnamon; fry for 30 seconds, or until very fragrant. Watch carefully so it does not burn.
2. Add the garlic and onion and continue stirring for 6-8 minutes until the onion is golden brown. Tip in the tomatoes and cook for 4-6 minutes, until soft.
3. Pour in the boiling water, stir, and return to boiling. Reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Add the ginger, salt and chili powder, if using, and simmer for another 5 minutes. Remove the cinnamon stick and bay leaves.
5. Transfer soup to a blender and blend (or use an immersion blender. Pour through a fine-meshed strainer into the rinsed pan. Reheat, if necessary, and serve hot, drizzled with a sprinkling of pepper. Drizzle each bowl with peanut oil.

Eggplant. I had a couple of eggplant left, and remembered this wonderful appetizer I had tasted in the past, but found in a little cookbook titled “Cooking in Season,” by my friend Connie Dorval. It uses eggplant, peppers, onion, garlic, and tomatoes—practically our whole CSA box. I feel certain that even those who are not delighted with eggplant will love it. It is wonderful served the next day with crackers or crusty bread. *Gourmetville!*

Caponata

1 large, or 2-3 small eggplants, peeled and diced into cubes
1 onion, chopped
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
1 small green pepper, diced
1 cup of mushrooms, sliced (I used canned, and they worked well)
1/3 cup olive oil

¼ cup water
6 ounces of tomato paste (OR 2-3 tomatoes, minced, and omit water)
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar, or more to taste
½ cup stuffed green olives, sliced
1 ½ teaspoons sugar
½ teaspoon, each, crushed oregano and basil, dried (or use 2 teaspoons, each, fresh)
Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium baking dish, mix the eggplant, onion, garlic, peppers, mushrooms, and olive oil. Cook, covered, for 10 minutes in the preheated oven.

Remove eggplant mixture from the oven, and stir in the water, sliced olives, salt, tomato paste (or finely diced tomatoes), vinegar, sugar, and spices. Return the dish, covered, to the oven and bake 30 minutes more, or until eggplant (and tomatoes, if used) are tender. Chill mixture overnight and serve at room temperature.

Yellow Wax Beans: Several people have asked about recipe ideas, and I have found an interesting recipe that pairs them with cherry tomatoes and bacon. This moves the beans from blah-looking to gorgeous, and delicious! Serves 6-8.

Warm Yellow Wax Beans in Bacon Vinaigrette

2 pounds yellow wax beans, trimmed
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
4 ounces thickly sliced bacon, cut into lardons (1 cup)
2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
10 ounces cherry tomatoes, halved
1 small shallot, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/3 cup chopped basil
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

Cook the beans in a large pot of salted boiling water until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Drain the beans and cool them under cold running water. Drain well and pat dry; transfer the beans to a large bowl.

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil. Add the bacon and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until golden, 7 to 8 minutes. Remove the skillet from the heat and stir in the vinegar, tomatoes, shallot, garlic and basil. Scrape the bacon vinaigrette over the beans, season with salt and pepper and toss to evenly coat. Serve warm.

Do you have a recipe you think others would like to try? Please send them to me and I'll share with others.

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