



FOOD FOR THE BODY & SOUL

WEEK OF APRIL 5, 2021 #14/52



Why Did You Join A CSA?

I really enjoy reading the responses to this question when people first join our CSA. Probably the most common response is “I want fresher veggies, and I want to be exposed to things I wouldn’t have bought on my own.” That second half is interesting because for many it is exactly the reason they do *not* join a CSA. Sometimes people tell us they lived elsewhere in the country and belonged to a CSA and loved it. I love those people (not that I don’t love all of you), but if you belonged to a CSA, moved across the country and joined another, you get it. CSA life is different, especially when you stick with it.



If you have been reading my stories for a few years you probably know that I started working in health food stores when I was 24, so I have been an avid supporter of organic foods, and alternative health basically my entire adult life. Despite all those years of eating good organic veggies (which were by far much better than what you could buy in the supermarket) when Nigel and I first started dating I was amazed at the difference in flavor and overall yumminess of the food I was then exposed to. Besides great farm veggies, all of a sudden I had access to pounds of Spring Hill butter, because their market stand was next to Nigel’s and he would bring pounds of it home each week, plus there was the Blue Bottle coffee, and the Fatted Calf bacon, all traded for with Eatwell eggs. Sunday morning soft boiled eggs on good bread, with that great butter and a fantastic cup of coffee literally changed my life. Nigel always said his eggs were a gateway drug and in my case that was absolutely true! After about a year I realized there were loads of veggies that I hadn’t really eaten before, and now actually love, like collards, kale and turnips. I don’t know if I had even tried turnips before life with my farmer. Today I consider them an absolute staple for much of the year when we do not have potatoes. I cooked up collards the other night and enjoyed them so much, they have such an earthy, good to the bone kind of green flavor. Not surprising because they are high in Vitamins A, C, B’s, K plus calcium, iron, potassium and magnesium. Collards are blood and bone rockstars. Just before we started dating Nigel came up to me at the market with a Valentine’s gift, a giant Romanesco, I didn’t even know what it was back then!



Such a silly man he was. The point I am making is there are many veggies I had never heard of, ever tried or liked until I starting living a CSA lifestyle. But the best things happened after the first couple of years, and that was realizing how

much I would start craving many veggies just as we were nearing the end of a season. By September I am always looking forward to that combination of dark greens and the sweetness of winter squash or sweet potatoes. Typically at this time of year my craving for red strawberries intensifies, and in another month my tastebuds will be screaming for juicy red tomatoes and summer squash! The enjoyment of looking forward to these fruits and veggies is as much a part of my life as eating them. The anticipation makes them even more precious and enjoyable when the season hits. After a few years of recognizing these cravings, it dawned on me that I was now in tune with the seasons, such as they are here. What a blessing to be so connected to our environment, to nature and the cycle of life in California, a place that many believe has no seasons. It is there, all of it, right in your CSA box!

As we move through this pandemic and more and more folks are vaccinated and hopefully cases go down, the farm is a wonderful place to visit. We have some room for a few more families to come up this coming weekend to help us with either the orchard or the strawberry patch. If the following weekend works



better for you, we can always use more hands that weekend too. Come on out and see where your food comes from, meet us, your farmers and let your feet and heart touch this land that is truly so incredible. If you can join us please text me at 530-554-3971.

RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

The Lasagna recipe I am sharing with you this week is a big one, so we don't have much room for anything else.

However, I would suggest if you do make this why not use the lettuce and make a great salad to go with it? Or make a really simple salad of shaved [Fennel and Orange](#). Or perhaps you don't want to make anything even remotely as complicated as lasagna, so why not try the simplest pasta dish, Alice Waters' Spaghetti With Green Garlic link is [here](#).

Butternut Squash Lasagna

Recipe by Traci York from Vanilla and Bean

We are taking advantage of the fact that Terra Firma has some Butternut Squash left, especially while we are in this shoulder season waiting for new crops to come in. I was planning on bringing a dish of lasagna to Lilly and Cameron this week, found this delicious recipe, and it looks perfect. She gives a lot of great tips so check out the link for those. This is a big recipe and does require some time, in total about 2 hours 45 minutes, so you will need to plan ahead.

Cooking Spray for baking

2 1/2 lb Butternut Squash, you

will need about 2 cups mashed

2 TB + 2 tsp Olive Oil, divided

1 1/2 TB dried Sage

1 medium head of Garlic, top

sliced to expose garlic

1 Yellow Onion about 3/4 lb (or

use your Spring Onions), sliced in

half

2 TB Water

1 bunch of Kale or use your bag of Spinach, washed

well and chopped Spinach will need a little less

cooking time

4 cups Whole Milk, divided

1 Bay Leaf

4 Sprigs of Thyme or and herb bundle of Thyme & Rosemary

4 TB All Purpose Flour

1/4 tsp Peper, ground

3/4 tsp Nutmeg, ground

1/4 tsp Red Pepper Flakes

6 Dry Lasagna Noodles, Whole Wheat or Regular she recommends Bionaturanoodles that are 3" x7.5"

7 oz Fontina Cheese, grated, divided

Parmesan and fresh chopped Parsley to garnish

Preheat oven to 425F. Spray an 8 x 8 (2 quart) casserole or baking dish with pan spray, set aside. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper. Set aside. Split and de-seed the butternut squash. Drizzle 1 Tbs oil on the flesh and spread it around on the surface. Sprinkle flesh with 1/2 tsp sea salt and all the sage. Turn the flesh face down to roast. Wrap the garlic sprinkled with 2 tsp oil in foil and place on the same pan as the butternut squash. Roast garlic for 30-40 minutes and butternut squash for 40 - 55 minutes or until the garlic is soft and butternut gives under gentle pressure. If roasting two smaller butternut squashes, they'll roast faster than one large one. Keep an eye on them and start checking around 25-30 minutes. Remove from oven and cool until both can be safely handled. Scrape flesh of butternut squash from the skin and discard skin. Squeeze the garlic out of its

papery skin. Discard the skin. Using a potato masher, mash the garlic and butternut squash together (I do this right on the roasting pan). A few chunks are ok. Set aside. While the squash is roasting, slice the onions. Add 1 tsp of oil to a dutch oven or large saute pan (non stick is helpful here), heat until oil shimmers then add the onions with 1/4 tsp salt. Caramelize the onions for about 25-30 minutes, stirring occasionally, on low heat, lid the onions about 10 minutes in, stirring occassionally. The'll probably start sticking, so add a splash of water to loosen, several times if needed. The onions should be browned and soft. Spoon into a large mixing bowl. Set aside. In the same dutch oven or saute pan, add the chopped kale or spinach with 2 Tbs water on medium heat. Cover and steam for 3 minutes, opening at 2 minutes, stirring, and recovering. The kale should be slightly wilted. Drain any excess water and add to bowl with caramelized onions and stir to incorporate the ingredients.

UPDATE 11/20: I've been making this recipe recently using dry Bionaturae lasagna noodles (both whole wheat and plain), layering them in the lasagna without cooking them first and making sure they're covered in sauce. I cooked the lasagna for 10 minutes longer covered (for a total of 40 minutes) as opposed to the original 30 minutes covered. We love the results! OR To Cook the Noodles: In a large stock pot bring water to a boil to prepare lasagna pasta. Cook according to package directions. Drain and lay noodles flat and separated onto a dry work surface. It's ok if they cool. Make the Béchamel: Wipe out the dutch oven or saute pan and add 3 1/2 C of milk, bay leaf, and thyme (or

herb bundle). Bring to a simmer, just until the milk begins to bubble around the edges of the pan, then remove from heat. Allow the herbs to steep in the milk for 10 minutes. Remove the herbs and bayleaf and discard. To the reserved 1/2 C of milk, whisk in the flour. Add the milk/flour mixture into the steeped milk and whisk over medium high heat, until blended. Bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low to low and gently simmer for about 5 minutes, until thickened, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and stir in the remaining 1/4 tsp of salt, pepper, nutmeg and red pepper flakes. Stir in 3/4 C of the grated fontina. Set aside. To Assemble: In the prepared 8x8 baking dish spread a scant 1 C milk/cheese mixture in the bottom. Layer in two lasagna noodles (without overlapping the noodles). On top of the noodles, spread 1/2 the butternut squash mixture, then 1/2 the kale/onion mixture. Spread a scant 1 C of milk/cheese mixture on top of the kale, then add two more lasagna noodles. Spread the remaining squash on the noodles, then top with the remaining kale and a scant 1 C of the milk mixture. Finish the lasagna off with the last two lasagna noodles and the remaining milk/cheese mixture. Sprinkle on the remaining cheese. To Bake: To cover: tent a sheet of foil taking care not to touch the surface of the lasagna with the foil. Bake at 425F, covered, for 30 minutes if baking with cooked noodles. If baking with dry noodles, bake for 40 minutes, covered, testing the noodles using a knife inserted in the center that yields to gentle pressure. Bake 5-10 more if needed. I have a bit of overspill when baking this recipe, so I simply place a parchment lined sheet pan on the rack below the lasagna to catch any spillage. Remove the foil and broil for 2-4 minutes or until cheese on top is lightly browned and bubbly. Let stand for 15 minutes before serving. Serve with parmesan and parsley.

This Week's Box List

*Spring Onions

*Parsley

*Fennel

*Green garlic

Celeriac

*Mandarins or Oranges

Leeks

Spinach

Rosemary

Turnips or Beets

*Lettuce from Terra Firma

*Butternut squash from Terra Firma

** indicates Box for 2*