



## **47<sup>th</sup> Ave Farm CSA for the week of June 27, 2012**

Some new treats this week: napa cabbage, kohlrabi, romaine lettuce and dry beans. I included the Caesar dressing last time as an alternative to the avocado dressing but this time you get the full Caesar recipe so you can take advantage of the beautiful romaine. And if you had the 47<sup>th</sup> Ave Winter Share you might be familiar with the Japanese Cabbage pancakes. I typically make them with regular green cabbage but they are lovely with Napa as well. Definitely give those a try. They are quick and surprisingly delicious. And children tend to like them. And oh those beans! Enjoy them!

### **Peanut Noodles with Pac Choi**

#### **Classic Caesar**

#### **Kohlrabi Salad with Dill and Lemon**

#### **Okonomiyaki (Japanese Cabbage Pancakes)**

#### **Cumin Lime Cole Slaw**

#### **Fennel Salad**

#### **Fennel Notes**

#### **Bean Suggestions**

#### **Spring Minestrone**

### **Sesame Peanut Noodles wit Pac Choi**

Serves 4 as main or 5-6 as side

Quick, easy (if you have everything on hand), and a crowd pleaser. Feel free to add grated turnip to this if you'd like. Also diced, fried or grilled extra firm tofu or leftover chicken, shrimp. . This one of my go-to quick dinners. I made it this week with pac choi, added to the cooking pasta just before it's done. It was delicious.

For the sauce:

½ cup smooth peanut butter

2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil

2 tablespoons soy sauce

1 tablespoon grated ginger

4 garlic cloves, pressed or minced to a paste

3 tablespoons fresh lime juice

2 teaspoons red chilie sauce or ½-1 teaspoon chili flakes (to taste)

1 tablespoon rice vinegar

1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon brown sugar

3 tablespoons hot water (depending on your peanut butter you'll need more or less water to thin to the proper consistency)

¾ - 1 pound whole wheat or white spaghetti or linguine or noodle of your choice

1 large bunch pac choi, well washed and then sliced into ribbons and then roughly chopped

1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil

2 spring red onions, thinly sliced

¼ cup cilantro leaves, roughly chopped

2 tablespoons sesame seeds, lightly toasted (optional)

Blend all the sauce ingredients together in a small bowl until smooth and set aside. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and add pasta. Set a timer for 2-3 minutes before the pasta is done and add the pac choi--cook until both are al dente. Drain pasta and greens in a colander, reserving half a cup of the cooking liquid, and rinse with cold water until cooled. Toss with sesame oil and place in a large serving bowl.

Add the scallions and cilantro and grated turnip (if using, see headnote) to the noodles and toss. Pour about half of the sauce over the noodles and toss with a couple of spoons or a pair of tongs, adding more sauce as needed to coat the noodles. If the sauce is too thick to blend smoothly with the noodles and vegetables, add a tablespoon or two of the reserved cooking water while tossing. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and toss again to distribute evenly. Serve at room temperature.

### **Classic Caesar Salad**

Serves 4-6 depending on appetites and what else is being served

1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese  
2-3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice  
3 tablespoons good olive oil  
4-5 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
4-5 flat anchovy filets (or more to taste)  
1 egg yolk  
1/2 teaspoon sea salt (or more to taste)  
Freshly grated black pepper  
1/4 teaspoon dry mustard (optional)  
1 large head of Romaine lettuce, washed, leaves cut in half lengthwise and then cut into 1 1/2 inch ribbons  
3/4 - 1 cup croutons or toast a slice or two of good crusty bread and tear it into bite-sized pieces

You can either use a food processor or a mortar and pestle. If using the latter, put the garlic, anchovy, pepper and salt in it and pound it into a smooth-ish paste. Scoop the paste out of the mortar and put it into a bowl. Then whisk in the lemon juice and egg yolk and then slowly add the oil and finally the Parmesan. If using a food processor start with the garlic, anchovy, lemon juice and salt and then add the ingredients in the same order. Stir the parmesan at the end after you've removed the dressing from the processor.

Toss with Romaine lettuce, top with croutons and some more freshly grated Parmesan.

### **Kohlrabi Notes**

I grew up in Germany eating kohlrabi. It is often combined with dill and cream. The below recipe has the dill but no cream and is an unusual but lovely combination. It is also good cut into small dice, sautéed in olive oil or bacon fat until tender and caramelizing around the edges and well salted.

## **Cabbage and Kohlrabi Salad**

*--adapted from Plenty by Yotam Ottolenghi*

This salad is one of my very favorite ways to use kohlrabi and it calls for cabbage too. I've usually used green cabbage but Napa works just as well. Those of you who had the winter share know how much I love this cookbook. I have to, sometimes heavily, adapt recipes since he calls for a lot of fairly exotic ingredients but his combinations really are brilliant.

2 medium kohlrabi, peeled and cut into matchsticks about 2 inches long and 1/8 – 1/4 inch wide  
3-4 cups finely shredded napa cabbage  
1 bunch dill, roughly chopped  
1 cup dried, whole sour cherries (or 1/2 cup dried currants or 1 cup raisins)  
Grated zest of 1 lemon  
4-5 tablespoons lemon juice  
Scant 1/4 cup good olive oil  
1 garlic clove, minced or mashed with some salt on a cutting board with the side of a chef's knife into a paste  
Salt and freshly ground pepper

Put all ingredients in the large mixing bowl and using your hands massage everything together really well. Let sit for 10 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning. You need quite a bit of salt to counteract the lemon. Then lift salad into a serving bowl leaving much of the juice behind, and serve.

## **Okonomiyaki (Japanese Cabbage Pancakes)**

These traditionally include finely chopped shrimp so by all means add this if you'd like. I love them like this. They are great party food and just as good for a simple supper with a salad on the side. Makes about 12 pancakes.

Sauce:

Scant 1/2 cup mayonnaise  
Scant 2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 tablespoon Sriracha

Pancakes:

4 large eggs  
1 teaspoon soy sauce  
1 teaspoon sesame oil  
1 – 1 1/2 teaspoon sea salt  
1/3 cup all purpose flour  
3-4 cups napa cabbage, sliced as thinly as possible (you can also grate or chop it in a food processor—I prefer the texture of the hand cut and if you have a good, sharp chef's knife it's quick work)  
4-6 green spring green onions, trimmed and thinly sliced  
Sunflower, coconut or peanut oil for frying  
1-2 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds

Whisk the first set of ingredients together for your sauce. Set aside while you make the pancakes.

In a large mixing bowl, whisk eggs with the soy sauce, sesame oil, and salt. Gradually add the flour and whisk until smooth. Fold in cabbage and scallions.

Warm a tablespoon or two of oil in a skillet over medium-high heat until glistening. Spoon the batter into the skillet as you would for regular pancakes. I usually make them about the size of saucer. Cook on each side for about 3 minutes or until golden brown. Keep pancakes covered in a warm oven as you make the rest. Scatter sesame seeds on top of pancakes and serve with dipping sauce.

### **Cumin Lime Cole Slaw**

This is my go-to, quick slaw. I vary the ingredients based on the season and for this week's share some the spring onions and some grated turnips will be perfect. Quantities are approximations so please feel free to use what you have. You can add finely slivered radishes if you'd like. And it is a fairly light slaw.

½ a medium Napa cabbage (about 4 cups sliced, cabbage)  
3 turnips, grated on the large holes of a box grater  
2 medium carrots (optional)  
2-3 spring red onions, very thinly sliced  
handful of cilantro, roughly chopped  
handful of fresh mint, roughly chopped (optional)

### **Dressing**

Juice of 1 lime (or lemon)  
1-2 teaspoons Dijon-style mustard  
3 tablespoons good-tasting olive oil  
1-2 tablespoons mayonnaise (or Greek yogurt or sour cream)  
1 – 2 teaspoons ground cumin  
pinch of red pepper flakes  
salt  
pepper

Thinly slice the cabbage and put in large salad bowl with the grated turnips. Add scallions or and cilantro and/or mint. Mix all dressing ingredients well in a small bowl and pour over veggies. Mix well. Let rest for 20- 1 hour to soften veggies and let flavors meld. Adjust seasoning.

### **Fennel Notes**

Fennel is crisp, juicy, sweet and has its signature and pronounced anise flavor. It's delicious added to salads of many kinds. Remove the fronds (tops) and trim any outer pieces that seem fibrous and tough. Then slice the bulb crosswise as thinly as you possibly can. Now you can toss with some of the romaine and arugula in your share and a lemony vinaigrette.

Another good combination is very thinly sliced raw fennel mixed with thin shavings of Parmesan, chopped fresh parsley, salt and pepper, lemon juice and olive oil. If you have a few oil-cured black olives, chop those roughly and toss them in as well.

Fennel is also good with fish. You can add a few slices of fennel and some chopped fennel fronds either to parchment paper packets of fish fillets seasoned with lemon, olive oil, salt and pepper or stuff a whole fish with same and bake.

## **Spring Vegetable Minestrone with Beans and Fennel Fronds**

You can use whatever kind of bean you picked up this week in this soup. I tend to cook beans whenever I have a moment and then have them on hand (in fridge or freezer). This way they become my go-to “fast food” since they are flavorful, tender and ready to enrich most anything. Bean soaking/cooking instructions are below.

You can use almost any vegetable here. This week turnips and kohlrabi will both be good and if you have homemade veggie bouillon (and some bean cooking liquid if you have it) and/or chicken stock makes a good base. The fennel fronds add a lovely fragrance to this soup.

And by all means add some diced bacon or sliced sausage to the onions sauté if you'd like.

Olive oil

½ a large onion, diced

3 carrots, cut into thin rounds (optional)

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 fennel bulb, diced

2 kohlrabi, peeled and diced

3-4 turnips, scrubbed and diced

2-3 tablespoons chopped fennel fronds

2 cups cooked cannellini, borlotti or other beans (see headnote)

¾ cup small pasta like tubetti or ditalini (very small, short little tubes) You could also break up spaghetti but you want a small-ish pasta for sure

4-5 cups veggie bouillon broth, chicken stock or any stock or water

Salt and freshly ground pepper

Good olive oil for drizzling

Saute onion, carrots, if using, and garlic in a large soup pot in 2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium-high heat, stirring often, until softened and starting to brown a little.

Add the cooked beans and all the broth or stock (or water) and bring to a simmer. Now add the pasta and after a few minutes add the fennel, kohlrabi and turnips. You're trying to time it so that the pasta and all the vegetables are tender at the same time but even if some things are a little softer than others it's a lovely soup. Toss in the fennel fronds just a minute or two before it's done. Taste and adjust seasoning and serve with a generous drizzle of good olive oil.

Serve the soup drizzled with good olive oil and add some more good sea salt and some more chopped fennel fronds and a squeeze of lemon juice.

## **Basic Dry Bean Soaking/Cooking Instructions**

If you aren't in the habit of soaking and cooking dry beans here are the basic steps. The flavor of the beans is very good this way and they are much, much cheaper than cans. Once in the habit, it's not much work at all. And I always soak and cook more than I need for any given recipe and freeze the rest in some of the cooking liquid.

4 cups dried beans (garbanzo, white, black, pinto. . . ) Rinse beans if they look dusty and pick out any stones. Usually I don't find anything like that. Place in a large bowl covered by about 4 inches of cold water. Soak over night or 6-8 hours. Drain and rinse beans.

Place soaked beans in a large pot and cover with cold water by several inches. Add a few whole, peeled garlic cloves, a bay leaf and a chunk of peeled onion. Bring to a boil, turn down to a simmer and let cook covered until the beans are tender, stirring occasionally (this helps prevent some beans from softening before others.) I've had good luck salting at the beginning of the cooking process but know that sometimes it can prevent beans from cooking properly, so salt mid-way through or at the end if you'd like. When you do add salt, be generous, as in at least 2-3 teaspoons salt to start if you're cooking 4 cups or so of dried beans. They'll probably need more still. The time it takes for the beans to cook will vary depending on the kind of bean and the freshness of the dried beans. Garbanzos take the longest, usually about 35-40 minutes. Black, white and pinto can be done in 20-30 minutes. Let beans cool in their liquid (if you're not in a rush) and then use, freeze, etc. If you're freezing some, fill your container with the beans and then ladle in the cooking liquid until the beans are almost covered. Cooked beans also keep in the fridge for 5-6 days.

### **Suggestions for using home-cooked beans:**

- Use in a quesadilla with some cheese, herbs, green onions, & hot sauce or salsa
- Mix cold with salad greens, cheeses and/or hardboiled egg, nuts, herbs and flavorful dressing for hearty salad
- Refry with onion, garlic, cumin, hot pepper in a couple of tablespoons of olive oil or lard (if black or tigers eye)
- Make a fresh salsa/salad with minced Serrano chili, diced sweet onion, cumin and fresh cilantro and lime juice
- Make a soup/minestrone with any vegetables you have on hand, maybe some sliced sausage or chopped bacon, and finished with fresh herbs (see above).
- Make a quick, thick soup by sautéing a good amount of onion, maybe some celery and garlic and some sausage or bacon if you like. Add some ground cumin and coriander and sauté for another minute. Add cooked beans and some of their cooking liquid, some canned tomatoes if you like. Simmer for about 10 minutes to meld flavors and then serve over rice with fresh herbs and olive oil or Greek yogurt as a garnish.