



47th Ave Farm Winter CSA for the week of February 6, 2012

Make the Japanese Cabbage Pancakes with your Savoy cabbage. They are quick and really, ridiculously good and easy. And speaking of cabbage, cabbage and potatoes make for a lovely combination, whether with Portuguese or German flair. And if you have the time, make the chocolate beet cake.

Rutabaga Notes

Collards, Bacon and Winter Squash

Collard, Carrot and Sesame Soba Noodles

Parsnip and Celery Root “Cake” (Gratin without the milk and cheese)

Parsnips with Bacon

Japanese Cabbage Pancakes

Caldo Verde

Cabbage with Crispy Potatoes and Fried Egg

Spiced Roasted Beets

Chocolate-Beet Cake

Rutabaga Notes

You’ve gotten lots of rutabaga recipes over the last few months and today I’m just going to point out some places where they will make great additions or substitutions. The below recipe for the Sesame Soba noodles calls for carrots but you can add them same freshness and crunch by using grated, raw rutabaga instead or in addition to the carrots.

The parsnips cake (gratin) is wonderful with parsnips and celeriac but rutabaga is a great substitute for the celeriac. Finally, for the Japanese cabbage pancakes, you could use half cabbage and half, grated rutabaga with excellent results.

Collard, Carrot and Sesame Soba Noodles

This is a robust, bright room temperature dish that is begging for seasonal adaptations depending on the greens at hand. I love it this way, with thinly sliced collards that you briefly cook with the soba noodles.

1 small bunch collard greens tough stems removed, leaves thinly sliced (about 4 cups)

2 -3 carrots, grated (on large hole of box grater) or half a rutabaga (grated)

1-2 green onions (scallion), thinly sliced (or a small piece of regular onion, thinly sliced)

2-3 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds

8 ounces soba noodles (or regular spaghetti—whole wheat spaghetti actually works too in this preparation)

Dressing

2 tablespoons Tahini (sesame paste)

2-3 tablespoons Greek yogurt or whole milk plain yogurt

2 tablespoons peanut or olive oil

1 tablespoon (or more to taste) soy sauce or tamari

1 medium clove of garlic, minced or mashed with side of knife
½ Serrano chili, minced (with or without seeds depending on how spice you like things) or ½ teaspoon or more red pepper flakes
2 teaspoons grated or finely minced, fresh ginger
Juice of 1 lemon (or lime)
A little water to thin out the dressing, if necessary
Salt

Cook the soba noodles in a large pot in plenty of salted, boiling water according to package instructions. Usually they take about 6-7 minutes to cook. 3 minutes before the noodles are done add the thinly sliced collards and bring back to a boil. Cook until the noodles are tender and the collards have softened a bit. Drain the greens and noodles together and rinse with cold water. Drain well and put in a large bowl. Add the grated carrots and onion.

Whisk dressing ingredients until emulsified and smooth. Taste for seasoning. The dressing should be quite strong since it's going to dress a lot of veggies and noodles. If the dressing is too thick thin it out with a little water. Toss noodles and veggies with dressing, mix well and adjust seasoning. Add the toasted sesame seeds at the end and toss again.

Collard Greens with Winter Squash and Bacon

I threw this dish together the other night and it turned out to be a winner. And beautiful to boot. You could fry or poach an egg to serve on top of this and call it dinner.

For this dish to work you need a large skillet and you need to cut the squash into really small pieces. I suggest 1-inch long little batons or some such. You want the veggies to have enough room so they sauté/brown rather than steaming.

1 smallish bunch collard greens, washed, any tough stems removed and leaves cut into thin ribbons
2 shallots or half an onion, thinly sliced
2 (or more) slices bacon, cut into dice
2-3 cups of winter squash (Butternut, Hubbard, Delicata, etc.), cut into small pieces, see headnote
Oil for pan-frying
Salt and pepper

Heat a tablespoon or so of oil in the biggest skillet you have. Add the onion or shallot and bacon and cook over medium-high heat until the onions begin browning and the bacon renders most of its fat. Add the squash and the greens and several generous pinches of salt. Mix well and cook, covered, stirring often to prevent the veggies from burning, until the squash is tender, the greens have begun to caramelize a bit but still have a bite. Adjust seasoning. Serve.

Parsnip and Celery Root Cake

—adapted from Tender by Nigel Slater

Serves 3-6, depending on whether as a side or main

You can make this as written with parsnips and celery root or substitute rutabagas or turnips for the celery root. I'm sure potatoes and sweet potatoes would be comfortable in the mix too so feel free to use it as your use-up-random-veggies dish if you need to.

Parsnips can have woody and fibrous cores but if they are quite fresh they probably don't and you don't need to cut out the core. Taste a thin slice raw and see how it seems. I've found that parsnips I buy at the farmers' market are quite tender all the way through, even the really big ones.

You want to slice your veggies very thin. A sharp knife works great if you're comfortable and a bit practiced and the food processor is a good alternative too.

1 large onion, thinly sliced
2 medium or 3 smaller parsnips, scrubbed and thinly sliced.
1/2 a medium celery root, peeled and thinly sliced
4 tablespoons butter
1 teaspoon fresh or dried thyme, chopped up a bit
6 tablespoons vegetable broth or stock (I use veggie bouillon)
Salt and freshly ground pepper

Preheat oven to 375 Degrees F.

Toss the sliced onion and veggies in a large bowl with they thyme, at least a teaspoon of sea or kosher salt and plenty of pepper. You need to be generous with the salt.

Put the butter in a baking dish and place it in the oven while it's preheating. When the butter is melted add the veggie mixture and combine well and pack the veggies down as evenly as possible. Pour the stock or bouillon over the mixture. Place a piece of wax paper or aluminum foil over the veggies and press down firmly. Bake for an hour and then remove the foil and turn your oven up to 425 (or to broil if you're in a hurry) and cook for another five minutes or so until the top is nicely browned and the veggies are very tender.

Parsnips with Bacon

More bacon. . . or not. You can make this just with parsnips, olive oil and salt and it will be delicious.

Slice parsnips into 1/4-inch coins. If the parsnips are big, slice the coins into half-moons. Sauté the parsnips with or without some diced bacon in a large skillet over medium-high heat until tender and caramelized. Parsnips cook very quickly so this won't take too long.

Serve as is or with some finely chopped parsley and a drizzle of good olive oil.

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. As I mention in the rutabaga notes above, you can use half cabbage and half rutabaga (grated) in this recipe. It's one of my favorite variations for this recipe.

Makes about 12 pancakes.

Sauce:

Scant 1/2 cup mayo

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

4 cups savoy or green cabbage, very finely sliced (food processor grating blade works too) or 2 cups cabbage and 2 cups grated rutabaga

1 bunch scallions, trimmed and chopped

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 until incorporated. Fold in cabbage, scallions, and shrimp.

Warm a couple glugs of oil in a skillet over medium-high heat until glistening. Ladle the batter into the skillet as you would for regular old 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.

Caldo Verde (Cabbage and Potato Soup with Chorizo)

–adapted from Tender, by Nigel Slater

I included this recipe back in early December but it's worth including again because you have Savoy cabbage and it's best with Savoy. It's so quick and satisfying and even better the next day, though not very photogenic.

Savoy cabbage is very good in this but regular old green cabbage or any kind of kale works just as well. One chorizo is really plenty to flavor this soup well but if you've got meat lovers at the table feel free to toss in another. If you'd like to make this without the meat, I would add a teaspoon of smoked Spanish paprika (Pimenton) and another clove or two of garlic at the beginning.

Serves 4

Olive oil

1 medium onion, diced

2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

3 -4 medium waxy potatoes such as Yukon Gold, scrubbed and cut into medium dice

4-5 cups water or broth

2 bay leaves

1 chorizo sausage (about 4 oz), cut into thin rounds

4 cups Savoy cabbage (or other, see headnote), cut into thin strips

Salt and pepper

Good olive oil for drizzling

Sauté the onion and garlic over medium-low heat in a large pot in a bit of olive oil until soft, about 10 minutes. Add the potatoes and cook for a few more minutes before adding the water (or broth), bay leaves and salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, then turn down and simmer for about 20 minutes or until the potatoes are quite soft. Meanwhile fry the slices of chorizo in a small pan until they are crisp and the fat has been rendered.

Mash the potatoes in the pot with a fork or potato masher until partially broken down. You want the potatoes to thicken the soup but also leave plenty of lumps. Add the cabbage and cook for a few minutes until tender. Add the chorizo; adjust for salt and serve the soup drizzled with good olive oil and another grind of pepper.

Cabbage with Crispy Potatoes and Fried Egg

Serves 4

I grew up eating variations of this dish in Germany. The quantities are all approximations. Use what you have, increase, decrease to suit your tastes and/or what you have on hand. The addition of caraway seeds makes it very typical and a bit unusual but it's lovely with or without. The sweetness of cabbage cooked this way is remarkable. I tend to eat too much of this when I make it and the cabbage is definitely my favorite part.

2 tablespoons olive oil

½ a medium Savoy or green cabbage, halved again, heart removed and cut into ½-inch ribbons

3 medium firm-fleshed potatoes cut into ½-inch dice

1 medium yellow onion, chopped

1 teaspoon caraway seeds (optional) or cumin seeds if you don't have caraway

4 eggs (or whatever you want to use/# of people you're serving)

salt and freshly ground pepper

Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a large sauté pan. Add the onions and caraway (or cumin) seeds and cook for about five minutes. Add the potatoes and a generous pinch or two of salt and sauté over medium-high heat, uncovered and stirring frequently until the potatoes are tender and crispy—about 15 minutes. You may need to add a little oil to prevent the potatoes from sticking and/or turn the heat down a bit.

Meanwhile, in another large sauté or frying pan, heat the other tablespoon of olive oil, add the cabbage and several pinches of salt and cook over medium-high heat stirring frequently until the cabbage is tender and starting to brown, about 10-15 minutes. You may need to add a splash of water to keep from sticking/burning. Adjust seasoning.

When the cabbage is almost done, push the potatoes and onions over to one side of the pan, add a little oil to the "open area" of the pan and fry your eggs there. If you don't have enough room just move the potatoes and onions over to one side of the pan with the cabbage. Saves washing another pan. Serve the potatoes on a bed of cabbage with a grind of pepper and top with an egg and more pepper and a little good salt and olive oil if you'd like.

Spiced Roasted Beets

--adapted from Food Matters by Mark Bittman

This is a delicious warm, earthy side dish. You may have some spice mixture left over which you can use to season rice, noodles, other, veggies or soup.

1-2 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil
About 4 large beets, peeled and cut into wedges
1 tablespoon sesame oil
1 tablespoon black peppercorns
2 teaspoons sesame seeds
1 tablespoon orange zest
1 tablespoon chili powder
½ teaspoon poppy seeds
Salt
½ cup sliced scallions or yellow or red onion

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Lightly grease a baking dish with some of the vegetable or olive oil. Toss the beets with the remaining veg oil and the sesame oil. Roast for 20 minutes, then toss and roast for another 20 or 30 minutes until tender on the inside and a little crisp on the outside.

Grind the peppercorns and sesame seeds to a coarse powder in spice grinder or with a mortar and pestle. Transfer to a small bowl and stir in the orange zest, chili powder and poppy seeds. When the beets are tender, toss with most of the spice mixture, several pinches of salt and the scallions or onions and roast for a few more minutes to toast the spices. Serve hot or at room temperature.

Chocolate-Beet Cake

--Adapted from Tender by Nigel Slater via davidlebovitz.com

This cake is not overly sweet, which is good for those of you looking for more of a snack cake, rather than a towering, frosted dessert. If you don't want to seek out crème fraîche (which I haven't) a little whipped cream or vanilla ice cream are lovely accompaniments and it holds its own just plain too.

8 ounces beets, unpeeled, rinsed and scrubbed
7 ounces semi or bittersweet chocolate, chopped
1/4 cup hot, strong coffee (or water)
14 tablespoons (1 2/3 sticks) butter, at room temperature, cubed
1 cup flour
3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder (the darkest you can find, natural or Dutch-process)
1 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
5 large eggs, separated, at room temperature
Pinch of salt
1 cup sugar

Crème fraîche or whipped cream or vanilla ice cream and a sprinkling of poppy seeds (optional) for serving, if you'd like.

Butter an 8- or 8 1/2 inch springform pan and line the bottom with parchment paper. Boil the beets in salted water, covered, until they're very tender when you stick a knife in them about 45 minutes. Drain then rinse the beets with cold water. When cool enough to handle, slip off the peels, cut the beets into chunks, and grind them in a food processor until you get a coarse, yet cohesive, puree. (If you don't have a food processor, use a cheese grater.)

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).

In a large bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water, melt the chocolate, stirring as little as possible.

Once it's nearly all melted, turn off the heat (but leave the bowl over the warm water), pour in the hot espresso and stir it once. Then add the butter. Press the butter pieces into the chocolate and allow them to soften without stirring.

Stir together the flour, cocoa powder, and baking powder in a separate bowl.

Remove the bowl of chocolate from the heat and stir until the butter is melted. Let sit for a few minutes to cool, then stir the egg yolks together and briskly stir them into the melted chocolate mixture. Fold in the beets.

In a stand mixer, or by hand, whip the egg whites until stiff. Gradually fold the sugar into the whipped egg whites with a spatula, then fold them into the melted chocolate mixture, being careful not to overmix. Fold in the flour and cocoa powder.

Scrape the batter into the prepared cake pan and reduce the heat of the oven to 325°F (160°C), and bake the cake for 40 minutes, or until the sides are just set but the center is still just a bit wobbly. Do not overbake. Let cake cool completely, then remove it from the pan.

Serving and storage: This cake tastes better the second day; spread with crème fraîche and sprinkle with poppy seeds shortly before serving. Or serve them alongside.