

IN THE BAG
Potomac Vegetable Farms
June 17, 2009

Mini: Kale, summer squash medley, lettuce, garlic curls, peas, kohlrabi, sugar snap peas

Regular: Kale, summer squash medley, lettuce, garlic curls, peas, kohlrabi, escarole, basil tips, snow peas, sugar snap peas

We are nearing the end of the garlic curl season, so if you like the garlic curl pesto, make enough to freeze for later. We freeze it without the cheese, and add that later when we defrost it. We are finding that you can add garlic curls to almost anything you cook in a frying pan, so don't let these go to waste.

Kohlrabi: this alien looking vegetable belongs to the Brassica family (broccoli/cabbage family) and is very popular in Germanic countries. The leaves can be eaten like kale, but the real deal is the succulent bulb. It has a fairly fibrous outer skin that should be peeled. Inside, the crispy white flesh is wonderful raw, like a radish or like celery stick for dipping. Or it can be sliced and steamed/sautéed lightly and it tastes like broccoli stems.

Summer squash: today we begin a long and fruitful relationship with Squash. This is the first summer "fruit" of the season (fruit meaning the part with the seeds inside). We are excited to have it so early and abundantly. I love squash so much I just eat it boiled or steamed with butter and salt. That may work for a while, but we'll get you more creative recipes as the months roll on. You have two or three types of squash today, all taste pretty much the same, with the main difference being appearance and texture. If they are cut to the same size they will cook similarly.

Escarole: is a variety of endive whose leaves are broader, paler and less bitter than other members of the endive family. In taste -- but not color -- it is almost indistinguishable from radicchio.

Like radicchio, kale and chard, escarole is a hearty green that thrives in cooler weather. The heart of an escarole head is less bitter because the leaves haven't gotten as much sunlight. High in folic acid, fiber, and vitamins A and K, escarole can be eaten raw or gently cooked. Try tossing a few escarole leaves into a mild salad, serving some quickly wilted with lemon juice, or stir chopped escarole into soup. A medium head of escarole usually yields about seven cups of torn leaves.

Snow Peas: these are thinner than sugar snaps and commonly used in Asian cooking. They go down pretty easy raw as well! The string is more prominent and should be pulled out before cooking.

Potato and Escarole Soup

from *Moosewood Daily Specials*

2 tsp olive oil
2 cups chopped onion
1 tsp salt
1 tsp ground fennel seeds
1 head of escarole, rinsed and chopped
2 ½ cups peeled and cubed potatoes
8 cups garlicky stock
¼ tsp ground black pepper

1 cup grated parmesan cheese

Warm the oil in a soup pot on low heat. Add onions, sprinkle with salt, and cook until caramelized, about 20 min. stir frequently, adding a little water if necessary to prevent sticking. Add the fennel and escarole, cover and cook until the escarole has wilted, 5-10 min. Add the potatoes and stock and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce the heat, and simmer until the potatoes are tender, 15-20 min. Add the pepper. Serve topped with cheese.

Swiss Chard Empanadas (or use kale)

from *Little Guides Vegetarian* by Fog City Press

Pastry

2 cups all purpose flour
4 oz unsalted butter, chilled
2 ½ TBL unsalted butter, chilled
½ tsp salt
about 1/3 cup ice water

Filling

2 TBL olive oil
1 large onion, peeled and diced
1 lb swiss chard, chopped
1 oz Monterey jack or cheddar cheese
3 oz parmesan cheese
dash of lime juice
½ tsp salt
pepper
1 egg, beaten, for glaze

Combine flour, butter, and salt in a bowl. Mix lightly with fingers until mixture forms pea size pieces. Using a fork, stir in ice water, a little at a time, until dough forms. Knead lightly until dough comes together in a ball. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate for 1-2 hours.

Heat olive oil in frying pan. Add onion and cook for 7-10 min. Add chard stems and cook for 1-2 min. Add chard leaves and cook for 3-4 min. Remove from heat and place in bowl. Add cheeses and lime juice, mix and season.

To assemble empanadas, roll out dough on a lightly floured board to a thickness of 1/8 in. Cut out 12 rounds, 3 inches in diameter. Place about 2 TBL of filling on one half of each round, leaving a border about ½ inch wide. Dampen pastry edges with beaten egg, fold over to enclose filling and seal by pressing edges firmly with the tines of a fork. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 min.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Arrange empanadas on a baking sheet, brush tops with egg glaze and sprinkle with pepper. Cut 2 slits in each so that steam can escape. Bake for 30 min or until golden. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.