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Cook like a chef or just look like one!

Treat Yourself to an Around the Table Chef's Apron

Contact Susan Nye at susannye@tds.net or 603/526 7319

More information the web at www.susannye.com

What will you do on Earth Day? Celebrated every year on April 22nd, Earth Day is a reminder that our planet's resources while bountiful are far from infinite. The first Earth Day was held in 1970. It was a turbulent time with too many lows and not enough highs. It was a time of protest, with movements for and against a seemingly endless array of issues. There were demonstrations in New Haven, Washington, Seattle, San Francisco and everywhere in between. Is there any wonder that Simon and Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water" was the year's number one hit?

Reuse, Reduce and Recycle were not yet entrenched in our psyches and we were a long way away from our current widespread interest in Going Green. We were a prosperous, throwaway nation. We drove big sedans, huge station wagons and powerful muscle cars. We guzzled 36-cent-a-gallon gas without a care in the world. Factories were belching clouds of thick smoke and spewing sludge into once-clean rivers. The environment was hardly a concern and was rarely covered on the evening news.

Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin changed all that. An oil spill off Santa Barbara motivated him to launch the first Earth Day. In an era of demonstrations, he proposed the first nationwide environmental protest "to shake up the political establishment and force this issue onto the national agenda." Americans heard the call and on the first Earth Day, 20 million took to the streets, parks and auditoriums to demonstrate for a healthy, sustainable environment. The issue was recognized across the nation and rallies were held coast-to-coast.

Different groups had been fighting a wide variety of environmental concerns, from pollution, toxic dumps and pesticides to oil spills, dwindling wilderness and endangered wildlife. These groups were fragmented and disconnected. Earth Day brought them together as diverse pieces in one common cause.

Earth Day 1970 was indeed a rarity in American politics. Nelson was able to achieve support and alignment across party lines, from both rich and poor, city slickers and country folks, management and labor. Since that first Earth Day, tremendous progress has been made. Recycling is now commonplace. Most of us are trying to find ways to reduce the amount of trash we throw away and find new uses for the old stuff we used to consider junk. We can breathe a little easier with cleaner air and water and once endangered species like the bald eagle are thriving. But we still have a long way to go.

As we begin the countdown to four decades of going green, the thirty-ninth Earth Day will be commemorated and celebrated on the Mall in Washington and in cities and towns across the country. Earth Day is a wonderful way to greet spring and prepare for summer. Why not attend a rally and learn about new initiatives in your town, across the State and in Washington.

Prefer to spend the day active and outdoors? Make it a festive day with family and friends. Gather up a group of volunteers to help clean up your town or neighborhood. Head to a community park to pick up trash, plant trees and tend gardens. If you live near the water, spend the day at the beach cleaning up winter debris. The snow has melted leaving layers of litter on the roadside. Grab a trash bag and take a cleanup walk around your neighborhood. When the work is done, reward yourselves with a festive, potluck feast.

However you spend Earth Day, enjoy the changing seasons while you celebrate the planet and all things green!

Bon appétit!

Susan

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Dandelion Salad with Grilled Steak, Asparagus & Potatoes

A big, bountiful salad is a delicious way to welcome spring and Earth Day. This one dish supper may look complicated but it's really very easy. (Especially if you use leftovers!).

Enjoy!

Serves 4

2 cups mixed greens
2 cups chopped dandelion or arugula
1/2 medium cucumber, peeled, seeded and chopped
8 grape tomatoes, halved
1-2 scallions, thinly sliced
Vinaigrette (recipe follows)
2 ounces gorgonzola, crumbled
1/4 cup toasted chopped walnuts
Potatoes (recipe follows)
Steak (recipe follows)
Asparagus (recipe follows)
Garnish: fresh chopped chives and parsley

Vinaigrette

2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1-2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1/4 cup olive oil
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

1. Put the greens, dandelion, cucumber, tomatoes and scallions in a large bowl. Add a little vinaigrette and toss to combine. Arrange the salad on a large platter, sprinkle with gorgonzola and walnuts.
2. Slice the steak. Chop the asparagus. Top the salad with warm potatoes, steak and asparagus. Garnish with fresh chopped chives and parsley.

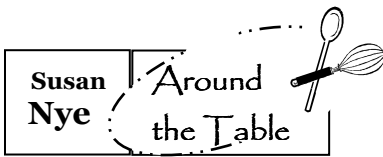
When shopping for dandelion for a salad, look for young, tender leaves. If you decide to harvest your own dandelions, make sure the area has not been sprayed with chemicals or fertilizers.

If you want, you can prepare the steak, potatoes and asparagus ahead of time or use leftovers. Remove the meat and vegetables from the refrigerator about an hour before serving to bring them to room temperature.

Potatoes

3-4 red skinned potatoes, cut in half and then thickly sliced
2-3 tablespoons olive oil
Juice of 1 lemon
1/4 cup chicken stock
1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary
1/2 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Place potatoes in a nonstick roasting pan large enough to fit the potatoes in a single layer. Add chicken stock, olive oil, lemon juice, herbs, salt, and pepper. Toss potatoes until well coated.
2. Roast, uncovered, until fork-tender and brown on the edges, about 20-30 minutes. Turn potatoes halfway through for even browning.



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Steak & Asparagus

1 - 1 1/2 pounds New York strip steak, cut at least 1 1/2 inches thick
1 pound asparagus

Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

1. Prepare a charcoal or gas grill. Fire should be medium hot.
2. Season the steak with salt and pepper. Grill the steak, about 4 minutes per side for rare and 6 minutes per side for medium rare. Transfer to a cutting board and let stand for 5-10 minutes.
3. Toss the asparagus with a little olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill the asparagus, turning once, until tender about 1 minute per side.