

Nourish Ourselves Nourish Our Community January 29, 2009

The greatest delight the fields and woods minister is the suggestion of an occult relation between man and the vegetable. I am not alone and unacknowledged. They nod to me and I to them. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson



In celebration of the first anniversary of the Evening Meals at School may we suggest that as you contemplate your next gardening season, you consider the many ways we can share our garden bounty with each other. Our community excels at sharing growing tips, saved seeds, and a surplus of zucchini. The exchange of ideas, techniques, and knowledge strengthens our understanding of cultivating food on Lopez Island, while the sharing of our harvest strengthens the vitality of our community and helps to distribute resources where they are most needed. Sharing is an integral part of community food sustainability.

We'd like to thank all those that contributed to the January community meal at school. The glorious organic squash and potatoes were grown by Christine from Lopez Harvest. Ken and Kathryn from Horse Drawn Farm contributed the ground beef, cabbage, onions, and kale. The garlic was provided by Todd Kegerreis. Sarah Rabel created the Fireside Herbal Chai. Many thanks to Holly B for the generous use of her cake pan collars. A book on African cooking borrowed from Aimee Nassoij provided the inspiration for the spicing of tonight's meal.

Last but certainly not least, let us thank the volunteers who are the unsung ingredients that make the stew of the community dinners a complete meal.

Sharing food with another human being is an intimate act that should not be indulged in lightly. ~M.F.K. Fisher

2009 Winter "Food" Film Series

Come view a community screening of a new indie documentary on one islands commitment to saving seeds.

Sunday, February 8th **"GARDENS OF DESTINY"**
Featuring Dan Jason of Salt Spring Seeds

4:00 p.m. Lopez Center
Suggested Donation: \$5 Adults
- complementary organic popcorn -

Sponsored by Lopez Locavores & the Lopez Center for Community and the Arts

Listen on KLOI 102.9 FM Wednesday, February 4th @ 11 a.m. to an interview w/ the director and excerpts of the movie!

North African Potato Stew with Caramelized Onions and Chickpeas

Serves 8

2 cups dried chick peas, picked through
2 lbs potatoes, cut into 1-inch cubes
3 large white or yellow onions, thinly sliced
2 to 3 Tblsp olive oil or butter
Harissa spice blend to taste-see recipe below
**Add other vegetables as desired: carrots, green beans, celery, root vegetables, sautéed winter greens

The night before: in a soup pot, cover chickpeas with 3 inches of water and bring to a boil. Remove from heat, making sure that at least 2 inches of water covers chickpeas, and soak overnight. The next day, pour off soaking water, cover chickpeas with fresh

water and cook at a slow simmer until just tender but not mushy, about 45 mins to an hour. Set aside. Melt butter or olive oil in heavy bottomed stockpot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onions and stir frequently until onions are limp. Reduce heat to low and cook onions until they are a deep golden brown-keep an eye on them. Toss in potatoes, a pinch or two of salt, and add enough water to cover. While bringing to simmer scrape up brown bits from bottom of the pot. Cook until potatoes are just soft. Add chickpeas plus enough of their cooking liquid to cover stew by 2 inches. Stir in Harissa to taste and simmer to stew for ½ hour to blend flavors.

Couscous

Makes about 4 cups

1 cup fine or medium couscous
3 cups water or broth
Salt to taste

Bring liquid to a rolling boil. Pour over couscous in a heatproof pan or dish. Shake pan to evenly distribute liquid and couscous, cover, and set aside for 7 mins. Remove lid and fluff with fork before serving. Taste for salt.

Golden Squash Cake with Chocolate Swirls

Makes 10-inch bundt pan or 9 by 13 inch pan

4 oz bittersweet chocolate
2 cups cooked, mashed winter squash
½ cup vegetable oil
4 eggs
1 tsp vanilla
3 cups flour
½ cup sugar
2 tsp baking powder
2 tsp baking soda
2 tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp ground ginger
¼ tsp each ground cloves and nutmeg
1 tsp salt
Preheat oven to 350°. Gently melt chocolate over a double boiler of just simmering water.

Sift dry ingredients and spices together in a large bowl. In the bowl of a mixer combine squash, oil, vanilla, eggs, and mix well. Add dry ingredients and mix until well combined. Put one-third of batter into separate bowl and stir in melted chocolate. Pour plain squash batter into a well-greased and lightly floured pan. Drop chocolate batter by large spoonfuls on top of plain squash batter. With your finger or butter knife gently slice through batter to drag chocolate batter through plain batter creating a marbled effect.

Bake for 30 to 60 minutes depending on pan size. Cool bundt pan upside down for ten minutes before removing cake.

Harissa

Makes 1 cup

¾ cup good quality olive oil
2 large minced garlic cloves
2 heaping tsp freshly ground caraway
½ cup mild chili powder
1 Tblsp ground coriander
1 tsp salt
2Tblsp chopped fresh mint or 1Tblsp dried

Heat oil until shimmering, add garlic and sauté about 4 minutes until golden. Remove from heat and add remaining ingredients. Cool. Refrigerate until ready to use. Use this condiment on meats, grains, and vegetables. It adds a lot of flavor but not a lot of heat.