

Carrboro Farmers' Market

Locally Grown  Nationally Known

May 1, 2004

Recipe of the Week  featuring Spring Lettuces

from Sheri Castle of Creative Cooking with Sheri Castle

Killed ("Kilt") Lettuce

When I was growing up in the Blue Ridge Mountains, two of the first things to appear in our garden were tiny leaves of tender lettuce and spring onions. My grandmother was a fabulous traditional Southern Appalachian cook who used those ingredients in a dish we called "Kilt Lettuce." It's similar to a spinach salad with hot bacon dressing and we ate it daily through the spring. I never thought about why we called it Kilt Lettuce. If asked, I might have guessed it had something to do with the strong Scottish heritage in our area. I was grown before I figured out that Kilt Lettuce was her colloquialism for "killed lettuce," i.e. wilted greens. Here's my version of her recipe. This dish is especially good with creamed potatoes and hot cornbread. - Sheri

Killed ("Kilt") Lettuce

6 generous handfuls (about 12 cups) fresh leaf lettuce
2 spring onions, sliced thinly
6 slices thick-sliced, applewood smoked bacon, cut into 1-inch pieces
¼ cup cider vinegar
2 teaspoons sugar
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Wash and dry the lettuce thoroughly. Place the lettuce and onions in a serving bowl. Fry the bacon in a skillet over medium heat until crisp. Remove the bacon with a slotted spoon and let it drain on paper towels, leaving the bacon drippings warm in the skillet over low heat. Add the vinegar and sugar to the bacon drippings, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Increase the heat to high and cook the mixture until it is very hot, but not smoking. Pour the hot dressing over the lettuce and onions, tossing to coat and wilt the greens. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve immediately—this won't keep.

Makes 4 servings.

(over)

Chapel Hill Carrboro Farmers' Markets

Carrboro Farmers' Market  Saturdays  March 20 – December 19

Carrboro Farmers' Market  Wednesdays  April 14 – October 20

Southern Village Farmers' Market  Thursdays  May 6 – Late September

Ingredients: Salad Greens

From **The Best Recipe** by the editors of **Cook's Illustrated**

BUTTERHEAD LETTUCES Boston and Bibb are among the most common varieties of these very mild-tasting lettuces. A head of butterhead lettuce has a nice round shape and loose outer leaves. The color of the leaves is light to medium green (except, of course, in red-tinged varieties) and the leaves are extremely tender.

LOOSELEAF LETTUCES Red leaf, green leaf, red oakleaf, and lolla rossa are the most common varieties. These lettuces grow in a loose rosette shape, not a tight head. The ruffled leaves are perhaps the most versatile because their texture is soft yet still crunchy and their flavor is mild but not bland.

ROMAINE LETTUCE The leaves on this lettuce are long and broad at the top. The color shades from dark green in the outer leaves to pale green in the thick, crisp heart. Also called Cos lettuce, this variety has more crunch than either butterhead or looseleaf lettuces and a more pronounced earthy flavor.

ARUGULA Also called rocket, this tender, dark green leaf can be faintly peppery or downright spicy. Larger, older leaves tend to be hotter than small, young leaves, but the flavor is variable, so taste arugula before adding it to a salad. Arugula bruises and discolors quite easily. Try to keep stemmed leaves whole. Very large leaves can be torn just before they are needed.

WATERCRESS With its small leaves and long stalks, watercress is easy to spot. It requires some patience in the kitchen because the stalks are really quite tough and must be removed one at a time. Like arugula, watercress usually has a mildly spicy flavor.

DANDELION GREENS Dandelion greens are tender and pleasantly bitter. The leaves are long and have ragged edges. The flavor is similar to that of arugula or watercress, both of which can be used interchangeably with dandelion.

MIZUNA This Japanese spider mustard has long, thin, dark green leaves with deeply cut jagged edges. Sturdier than arugula, watercress or dandelion, it can nonetheless be used interchangeably with these slightly milder greens in salads when a strong peppery punch is desired.

TOTSOI This Asian green has thin white stalks and round, dark green leaves. A member of the crucifer family of vegetables that includes broccoli and cabbage, tatsoi tastes like a mild Chinese cabbage, especially bok choy. However, the texture of these miniature leaves is always delicate.

SPINACH Of all the cooking greens, spinach is the most versatile in salads because it can be used in its miniature or full-grown form. Flat-leaf spinach is better than curly-leaf spinach in salads because the stems are usually less fibrous and the spade-shaped leaves are thinner, more tender and sweeter.

New !

Southern Village Farmers' Market

Thursdays

3:30 – 6:30 pm

on the Green at Southern Village

650 Market Street, Chapel Hill

Opening Day ~ May 6th

www.carrborofarmersmarket.com