

Stretch your gourmet food dollars with elegant dishes

See related story on Taste front.

WARM VEGETABLE SALAD

4 small zucchini, about 1 pound
 4 medium carrots, about 10 ounces
 4 stalks celery, about 6 ounces
 5-6 scallions
 1 small head cauliflower, 1 pound, washed and separated into 1 1/2 inch florets
 6 large radishes, washed and cut into 1/2 inch slices
 2 tablespoons Dijon-style mustard
 1/2 cup poppyseed oil
 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 Bring 4 cups water to a boil.

Meanwhile trim and wash zucchini. Cut crosswise into 3 inch chunks, then into 1/2 inch sticks. Peel the carrots and celery, cut both into 1/2 inch sticks. Trim scallions and cut into 2 inch sticks. Add the carrots and celery to the boiling water. Cook for 2 minutes, add cauliflower and boil for 5 minutes. Add zucchini and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the scallions and radishes and cook for 10 seconds. Drain reserving the vegetable stock for soup.

Prepare dressing: Mix together the dressing ingredients in a large bowl, add the hot vegetables and toss to coat with dressing. Serve lukewarm or at room temperature. Serves 6.

STRAWBERRY SUMMER PUDDING

1 1/2 pints fresh, ripe strawberries

1/2 cup sugar
 6 ounces bread
 3/4 cup strawberry jam
 1 cup sour cream

Clean and hull the berries. Cut 1/2 of the berries into thin slices, about 1/4 cups and mix with 2 tablespoons of the sugar. Set aside.

Place the bread in the bowl of a food processor and process a few seconds to make coarse bread crumbs to make 2 cups. Set aside.

Place the whole berries, the jam and remaining sugar in processor bowl and process until smooth. Transfer to a bowl and lightly fold in bread crumbs. Divide the pudding into six, 1 cup containers. Refrigerate for 2-3 hours.

To serve, spoon the reserved berry slices onto 6 dessert plates. Unmold the puddings on top of the berries and serve with the sour cream. Serves 6.

MACARONI BEAUCAIRE

1 pound elbow macaroni
 1/4 cup olive oil
 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
 1 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 1/4 cup minced chives
 1/2 cup canola oil
 2 eggplants about 1 1/2 pounds, cut lengthwise into 12 slices 1/2 inch thick
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 3 ripe tomatoes cut into 1/2 inch slices

1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
 Bring 3 quarts water to a boil. Cook macaroni until just tender 16-20 minutes. Remove 3/4 cup of the cooking liquid, and place in a serving bowl large enough to hold macaroni. Drain elbows. Add olive oil, grated cheese, salt and pepper to the reserved cooking liquid in the bowl. Mix well and add the drained elbows and chives. Mix well. Set aside.

For vegetable garnish: Heat the canola oil in a large skillet. When hot, add the eggplant slices in one layer, sprinkle them with the salt

and saute them for 2 1/2 to 3 minutes on each side until nicely browned. Remove and drain on paper towels. Reserve the 6 nicest slices of eggplant and half of the tomato slices and arrange the remainder of these vegetables in a 14 inch by 10 inch gratin dish to completely cover the bottom of the dish. Distribute elbows evenly on top and arrange the reserved eggplant and tomato slices alternating over the elbows. Sprinkle with shredded cheese.

Place the gratin in a preheated 400 degree oven for 20 minutes until cheese has melted and is heated through. Serves 6.

Zesty tomato salsa summertime treat

See Larry Jones' column on Taste front.

GREEN TOMATO SALSA

1 pound green tomatoes, skinned
 1/2 cup loosely packed chopped cilantro
 1 large clove garlic
 2 tablespoons chopped white onion
 1/2 teaspoon (or to taste) sea salt

Place the tomatoes in a pan and barely cover with water and bring to a simmer. Continue to cook until tomatoes turn a lighter, faded green and are just soft but not fall apart (about 5 minutes). Set aside to cool.

Place 1/4 cup of the cooking water into a blender or processor and add the cilantro, garlic, onion and salt, and blend until almost smooth. Drain the tomatoes and place in the blender and chop being sure not to overblend. The sauce should have a rough texture. Makes 2 1/2 cups.

Chef's secret: I added a few strips of Jalapeno for a kick!

To make a cooked sauce, add 1 1/2 tablespoons of oil to a saucepan and heat. Add sauce and cook, uncovered over high heat until thickened and reduced, about 8 minutes. Add more salt to taste, if needed.

Recipe source: "The Art of Mexican Cooking," by Diana Kennedy, copyright 1989, Bantam Books.

FRESH TABLE SAUCE

1 medium tomato, skin left on
 1/2 medium onion
 6 sprigs coriander, leaves only
 3 chile serranos or any small hot green chile
 1/2 teaspoon salt or to taste
 1/2 cup cold water

Chop the tomato with the onion and place in a glass bowl. Add remaining ingredients and allow to stand for 30 minutes before serving. Makes a little more than 1/2 cup.

Recipe source: "The Tortilla Book," by Diana Kennedy, copyright 1985, by Diana Kennedy, Harper and Row Publishers.

Add more whole grains to your meals

If you are interested in new ideas and tips for stretching your food dollars or are looking for ways to add more whole grains to your family's meals, take a look at a new series of brochures titled, Healthy Dialogue from the Quaker Oats Company.

The series, which features five brochures on topics that range from

how to use the new Food Guide Pyramid in meal planning to cleaning up the environment, was created to address questions that are on consumer's minds.

The series includes, Balancing Meals and Money, (Dept. HD-1); Go With The Grain, (Dept. HD-2); It All Adds Up — the role of food ingredients, (Dept. HD-3); Taking

Out The Trash for Good, (Dept. HD-4); and Debugging the System — Preventing Pests from Field to Pantry, (Dept. HD-5)

For a free copy of any of the brochures, or a complete set, send your name and address to Healthy Dialogue, Dept. HD (brochure number or HD-A for entire set), 1147 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60607.

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