

COOKING CONQUESTS



CHEF RANDY SMITH

Fire up your stove, put the grill away

Fall is here and cooking outside is becoming a thing of the past. Trying to keep warm while grilling your hamburger isn't much fun. As difficult as it may seem, it's time to clean, cover and store your beloved grill.

Put on your apron and pull out your food processor, it's time to cook indoors!

Here are two recipes that will heat up your kitchen as the temperature drops outside.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP

- 1 large butternut squash
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 1 parsnip, peeled and sliced
- 1 leek, white only, sliced
- 1 celery stalk, sliced
- 1 tablespoons all purpose flour
- 2 quarts chicken stock or broth
- 1 cup heavy cream or half and half
- White pepper and salt to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Cut squash in half, remove seeds and place on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake in a pre-heated 350°F oven until tender to the touch, about 1 hour. Remove from oven, allow to cool, and scoop out meat. Set aside.

In a heavy bottomed pot, sauté onion, parsnip, leek and celery in two tablespoons of butter. Add flour and stir until all of the flour is worked in. Cook 5 minutes, add chicken stock and squash meat. Simmer 30 minutes and blend until smooth. Strain through a sieve.

Return to the fire, add cream, white pepper, salt, nutmeg, brown sugar, and lemon juice. Adjust seasoning to taste if necessary. Serve in bowls or small, hollowed pumpkins. Garnish the top of the soup with a dollop of roasted walnut cream.

For roasted walnut cream: Roast 1/2 cup of walnut pieces in a 350°F oven until golden brown. Whip 1 cup heavy cream until hard peaks are reached. Cool nuts, crush lightly, and fold into cream. Serves 4-6 people.

ROAST PORK LOIN

RUBBED WITH MICHIGAN MAPLE CORIANDER GLAZE

POTATO AND PARSNIP PUREE

ORANGE-CRANBERRY RELISH

FOR PORK:

- 1 1/2 pounds boneless pork loin, trimmed to the silver skin
- 1 cup Michigan maple syrup
- 1/8 cup ground coriander seeds (or substitute ground sage)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

In a small saucepot, place syrup, honey and coriander. Bring to a simmer and reduce by half volume or until a thick glaze is reached. In a large sauté pan place olive oil on a high burner. When very hot, season pork with salt and pepper. Sear on all sides to get nice brown color. Remove and place pork loin in a roasting pan.

Pour 1/2 of the glaze over top of pork loin and place in 375°F oven for 35 minutes, or until internal temperature reaches 140°F. Remove pork loin from oven and let rest for 10 minutes on your cutting board.

FOR PARSNIP & POTATO PUREE

- 2 large Idaho potatoes peeled and cut into 1/8-inch pieces

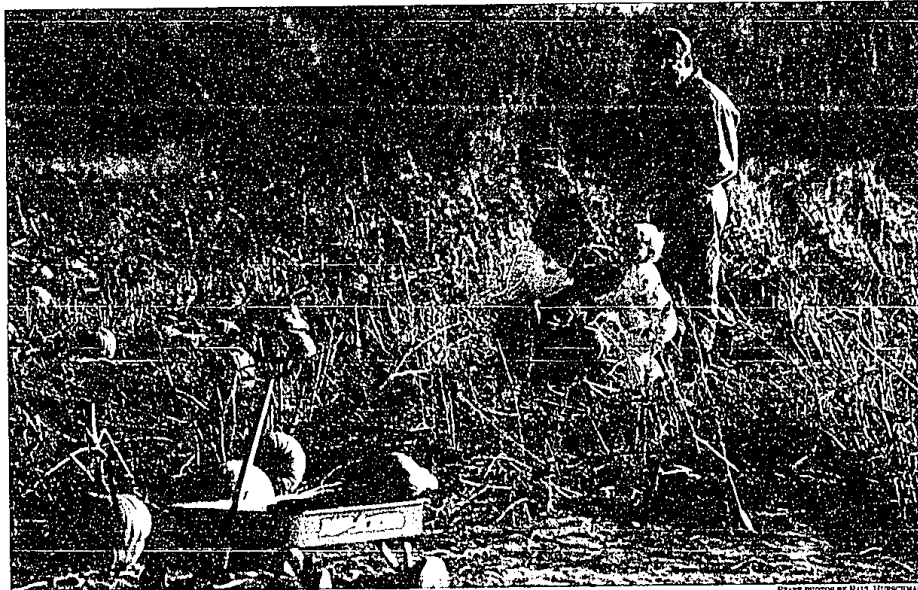
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LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Cheers for Bear
- Recipe to Share

HALLOWEEN



STAFF PHOTO BY PAUL HUSCHMAN

Pumpkin search: (Above) Jeff, Karen and Claudia Crampton, 2, of Plymouth select their Halloween pumpkin at Pearson's U-pick Pumpkins. (Below) Halloween scarecrows greet customers at Mary's Farm Market in Canton.

PUMPKIN PICKIN'



BY KEELY WYGONIK
STAFF WRITER
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Mary Emmett of Plymouth Orchards has noticed that most people go for round, traditional looking pumpkins, but she thinks it's nice to get a weird shape, one that's a little warped, tall or skinny.

No matter what shape you prefer, it's color that counts. "Look for a pumpkin with a nice, deep orange color, and a strong stem," she said.

"Keep your pumpkin in a cool place, but you don't want them to freeze," adds Patricia Pearson of Pearson's U-Pick Pumpkins three miles west of Plymouth. And the most important thing of all, "once you open it up the pumpkin starts spoiling," said Larry Meyer of Meyer's Pumpkin Farm in

Northville. "The pumpkins are done growing. They're lying in the field. I suggest you buy your pumpkin early, and keep it in the garage. Don't carve it until a few days before Halloween."

Pumpkins are part of the gourd family, which includes winter squash, butternut, acorn, and turban. Most of the pumpkins sold in the United States, about 99 percent, are carved into jack-o'-lanterns for Halloween. They're planted in the middle of June, and ready to harvest by the end of September. Local farmers say this year's crop, a pretty good one, was early. Some farms charge for pumpkins by the pound, others by the piece. Depending on the size, cost

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PUMPKIN PATCHES

The Michigan Department of Agriculture publishes a directory of most of Michigan's farm markets. Titled "1998-99 Michigan Farm Market and U-pick Directory." To get your copy, call (517) 373-1058 or send your request to the department, P.O. Box 30017, Lansing, MI 48909. Here are some nearby pumpkin patches to visit.

MACOMB COUNTY

■ Blake's Big Apple Orchard, (810) 784-9710 - One mile south of downtown Ann Arbor at North Avenue and 23 Mile Road. Open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. Cider, picked and u-pick pumpkins and apples.

■ Blake's Orchard and Cider Mill, (810) 784-5343 - Run by some family as Blake's Big Apple Orchard, 17885 Ann Arbor Center Road. Open 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily. Cider, picked and u-pick pumpkins and apples.

OAKLAND COUNTY

■ Driver's Berry Farm, (248) 437-8461 - 9191 Silverside Dr. (between Doane Road and Silver Lake Road), just west of South Lyon. U-pick pumpkins and hayrides 10 a.m. to dusk Saturday and Sunday. Open daily daylight to dusk.

picked pumpkins, corn stalks, straw, gourds.

■ Erwin Orchards & Cider Mill, (248) 437-4701 or (248) 437-2150 - 61475 Silver Lake Road (between Millford and South Lyon). Open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Cider, u-pick pumpkins and apples.

■ Long Family Orchard & Farm, (248) 360-3774 - Commerce Road (west of Big Lake Road) Commerce Township. U-pick pumpkins and free hayrides 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday-Sunday. Open 3-6 p.m. Monday-Friday, cider, u-pick apples, picked pumpkins.

■ Meyer's Pumpkin Farm, 48080 Eight Mile Road (1/4 mile west of Beck Road) Northville. Open daily daylight to dusk. U-pick pumpkins.

WAYNE COUNTY

■ Mary's Farm Market, (734) 981-2866 - 47453 Ford Road (southwest corner at Beck), Canton. Open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Picked and u-pick pumpkins, corn stalks, and other seasonal decorations.

■ Pearson's U-pick Pumpkins, (734) 453-0489 - Three miles west of Plymouth (southwest corner of Napier and Territorial Roads) Plymouth Township. Enter on Napier Road. Open 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. daily to Oct. 31. U-pick pumpkins, mini pumpkins, corn stalks and hay.

■ Plymouth Orchards & Cider Mill, (734) 455-2290 - 10685 Warren Road, Plymouth. U-pick pumpkins 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday-Sunday. Open 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Cider, picked apples and pumpkins, country store.

WASHTENAW COUNTY

■ Oberbaum Orchard & Cider Mill, (248) 349-5569 - 9252 Currie, Northville (four miles west of Beck Road between Seven and Eight Mile Roads). Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday & Sunday. Cider, u-pick apples, cider, pumpkins.

■ Ward's Orchard and Cider Mill, (734) 482-7744 - South of Ypsilanti, take I-94 to Huron St., go south 4 miles. Open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. Cider, u-pick apples and pumpkins.

If your pumpkin patch is not listed, fax information, including address, phone number, and hours of operation to: Keely Wygonik, Taste editor, (734) 591-7270, or send to her attention at the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Inc., 30251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150.

New Zealand wines score with wine lovers



BY ELEANOR & RAY HEAD
SPECIAL WRITERS

We're in the middle of a red wine boom, but white wines from New Zealand, particularly sauvignon blanc, are big hits. About two months ago, our column focused on New Zealand wines. Two more wineries, Brancott Vineyards and Villa Maria, have debuted wines in our market to rave reviews.

A recent meeting with Villa Maria's chief viticulturist Steve Smith, M.W. (first viticulturist in the world to achieve passing the rigorous exam for Master of Wine) set the background. He noted that the first vines were planted in New Zealand

by missionaries in the early 1800s, but it has only been in the last 20 years that New Zealand wineries have made great strides in the quality direction.

Today, Villa Maria with about 40 percent of its production as Sauvignon Blanc, is New Zealand's third largest producer. "But give us two or three years and we'll be coming on strong with pinot noir," Smith said.

First planted only in 1973, Marlborough, at the northeastern tip of the South Island, is the source for Villa Maria's excellent sauvignon blancs. All conditions are perfect: gravely well-drained soils, long hours

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Wine Picks

- Pick of the pack: 1995 Chateau St. Jean, Robert Young Vineyard Reserve Chardonnay \$28.
- Merlots definitely worth the money: 1995 Chateau St. Michelle Canoe Ridge Estate Vineyards Merlot \$29 and 1995 Chalk Hill Merlot \$36.
- Our wine column stressed New Zealand Sauvignon blancs. From California, delicious at a bargain price are: 1997 Kunde Magnolia Lane Sauvignon Blanc \$12.50, 1997 Benziger Fume Blanc \$10 and 1997 Chateau St. Jean Fume Blanc \$9.
- Other great values: 1997 R.H. Phillips Viognier \$12.50, 1996 Norton Malbec (Argentina) \$9, 1996 Domaine St. George Cabernet Sauvignon \$8, 1997 Casterra Cabernet Sauvignon (Chile) \$8, 1996 Errazuriz Cabernet Sauvignon (Chile) \$9, and 1997 R.H. Phillips Barrel Cuvée Chardonnay \$8.50.