

# Freshly cut herbs bring aroma, flavor to entrees, side dishes

Recipe courtesy of Dorothy Young of the Farmington Garden Club, a member of the Michigan Federated Garden Clubs.

## PESTO

2 cups fresh basil, packed gently into cup and put into food processor with:  
2 tablespoons pine nuts  
1/2 cup olive oil  
2 cloves garlic  
Salt to taste  
1/4 cup romano cheese  
2 tablespoons soft butter (optional)

Put basil in food processor with pine nuts, olive oil, garlic and salt to taste.

Blend, pour out into a bowl and add 1/4 cup parmesan cheese, 1/4 cup romano cheese and 2 tablespoons soft butter (optional).

## SUNFLOWER GREEN SALAD WITH THYME VINAIGRETTE

1 small carrot  
4 cups torn romaine or other greens  
1/2 cup thinly sliced radishes  
1/3 cup finely shredded green or red cabbage  
3 tablespoons toasted shelled sunflower seeds  
1/4 cup cider vinegar  
3 tablespoons salad oil  
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme, crushed  
1/4 teaspoon pepper

Peel carrot and shave thin slices with peeler. Toss together carrot shavings, greens, radishes, cabbage and sunflower seeds. In a screw-top jar combine vinegar, oil, thyme and pepper. Cover and shake well. Toss salad with dressing. Makes 5 servings.

## RATATOUILLE

### WITH FRESH BASIL, OREGANO AND GARLIC

1 teaspoon olive oil  
1 garlic clove, chopped

1 onion, chopped  
1 small or 1/2 large eggplant  
1 zucchini, chopped  
1 sweet red pepper, chopped  
2 tomatoes, chopped  
2 tablespoons tomato paste  
2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped  
2 tablespoons fresh Greek oregano, chopped  
2 tablespoons dry white wine

Heat olive oil and onions in a large pot. Cube eggplant, trimming out meaty center if desired and add to pot. Stir in red pepper, zucchini and tomatoes. Add tomato paste and a splash of wine. Add garlic and salt, turning up the heat, if needed. Cover and let simmer for 3 to 4 minutes. Turn off the heat, stir in the herbs, cover and let set for a few minutes. Serve with your favorite pasta.

## FISH BAKE

### WITH SUMMER SQUASH, ONION AND HERBS

2 teaspoons vegetable oil  
1 pound white fish fillet

2 onions  
2 zucchini  
2 yellow squash  
1/3 cup fresh lemon juice  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper  
3 tablespoons fresh herbs  
2 lemons

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Coat the bottom of a 9-by-12-inch ovenproof baking dish with the oil. Spread half the sliced onion, zucchini and yellow squash over the bottom of the dish. Lay the fish fillets on top of the vegetables. Cover the fish with the remaining onions and squash. Sprinkle the lemon juice over the dish and then salt and pepper. Cover tightly with aluminum foil. Bake the fish for about 45 minutes, until the fish is firm and opaque and the vegetables are tender. Just before serving sprinkle the herbs over the top. Note: Use any combination of thyme, tarragon, chives, parsley and dill for the herbs. Makes 4 servings.

The following recipes are courtesy of Peter Stark from his cookbook "In the Herb Garden."

## These Baja quesadillas are lively

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The growing popularity of Mexican food has made beans a staple food that turns up in many variations of Mexican dishes.

Baja quesadillas are easy to prepare and eat.

### BAJA QUESADILLAS

(Preparation 20 to 25 minutes, baking time 5 to 7 minutes)

Vegetable cooking spray  
1 medium zucchini, cut lengthwise in half, sliced  
1 cup sliced onion  
1 teaspoon minced garlic  
1 small jalapeno chili, minced  
1 teaspoon ground cumin  
15-ounce can black beans, or  
1-1/2 cups cooked dry-packaged black beans,  
rinsed, drained (see note)  
15-ounce can pinto beans, or  
1-1/2 cups cooked dry-packaged pinto beans,  
rinsed, drained (see note)

1 cup chopped tomato  
1/2 cup finely chopped cilantro  
Salt and pepper to taste  
12 tortillas (6-inch)  
3/4 to 1 cup (3 to 4 ounces) shredded four-cheese Mexican blend, or reduced-fat four-cheese Mexican blend  
Salsa, for garnish  
Sour cream, for garnish  
Preheat oven to 450° F.

Spray large skillet with cooking spray; heat over medium heat until hot. Sauté zucchini, onion, garlic, jalapeno chili and cumin until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes.

Add beans to side of skillet; coarsely mash about half the beans. Mix beans, tomato and cilantro into onion mixture and cook 1 to 2 minutes (see note). Spoon 1/3 cup mixture on one side

of each tortilla and sprinkle with 1-1/2 tablespoons cheese. Fold tortillas in half and spray both sides with cooking spray.

Bake on cookie sheet at 450° F until browned and crisp, 5 to 7 minutes, or cook in large skillet over medium heat until browned. Garnish quesadillas with salsa and sour cream. Makes 6 servings.

Note: Any canned or dry-packaged beans can easily be substituted for specific beans mentioned in ingredient list. The bean mixture can be prepared 1 day ahead of serving time and kept refrigerated in a covered container.

Nutrition information per serving (without garnish and salt): 408 cal., 11 g fat (23 percent of calories from fat), 66 g carbs., 832 mg sodium, 16 g pro., 11 g dietary fiber, 13 mg chol.

Recipe from The Bean Education & Awareness Network.

## Walnut and chocolate make filling for this rich dessert

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A routine meal can leave diners really happy when it is rounded off with a dessert as seductive as toasted walnut and chocolate tart.

The tart's filling combines chocolate and citrus-orange flavors, walnuts add a healthy crunch to the texture, and the recipe is easy as well as elegant.

It was created by Eric Olson of Ojai, Calif., student-chef at the Culinary Institute of America, and it won him the grand prize in a recipe competition for CIA students sponsored by the Walnut Marketing Board.

### TOASTED WALNUT AND CHOCOLATE TART

3 cups plus 12 halves walnuts, toasted  
1/4 cup simple syrup (see note)  
6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) unsalted butter, melted

12 ounces dark Belgian chocolate  
1-1/2 cups heavy cream  
2 tablespoons Grand Marnier

Zest of 2 large oranges, to candy for garnish

Toast walnuts in a 350° F oven for 5 to 10 minutes.

In a food processor coarsely chop 3 cups walnuts for crust. Place chopped walnuts in a bowl, add 2 tablespoons of the simple syrup and the melted

butter; mix well.

Place mixture in a 10-inch fluted tart pan with removable bottom and press into pan with your fingers to form a crust. Put pan in freezer to firm while you complete the next step (about 10 minutes).

Use a knife to break chocolate into small shards. In a medium saucepan bring cream to a boil, add chocolate and remove from heat. Stir until smooth.

Stir in Grand Marnier. Pour mixture into chilled tart mold and refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight.

In a small nonstick sauté pan, combine the remaining 2 tablespoons simple syrup and the orange zest. Cook over medium heat until most of the water has evaporated and the zest is translucent, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from pan and cool.

To serve: Keep chilled until ready to serve. Remove tart from pan. To slice, use a knife dipped in hot water and wiped with a towel. Garnish slices with powdered sugar-dusted walnut halves and candied orange zest.

Makes 12 servings.

Note: To make simple syrup, in a small covered saucepan, simmer 1/4 cup sugar and 1/4 cup water for 4 minutes to dissolve crystals.

Recipe from Walnut Marketing Board.

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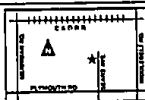
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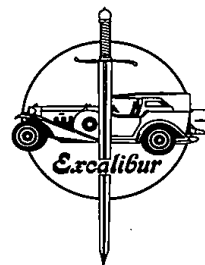
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