

Growing Orchard Communities

COMMUNITY ORCHARD TOOLKIT



Autumn Produce and Harvest

Recipes from a workshop lead by Nick Coiley at Agaric Kitchen, Ashburton

Autumn is a great time of year for produce, the abundance of which gives inspiration in the kitchen. From figs and apples to medlars, quinces and squashes, most of the fruits store well and improve with keeping if kept cool and dry.

We have an 8 acre piece of land where we have planted an orchard of local varieties of apple, quinces, medlar, plums, gages, damsons and pears as well as crab apple, fig, cherry and mulberries. We also planted 40 Northern variety olive trees which are steadily growing stronger. Soft fruits are grown in fruit cages, so making jam is essential to utilise all this fresh produce. We have a large polytunnel where we grow salad, cucumber, tomatoes, greens and squashes. Other vegetables that I use are grown by Charles Staniland and Rachel at Cuddyford Meadows.

These recipes will offer just a glimpse of the Autumnal harvest and hopefully a few new ideas on how to enjoy it.

Nick

Spicy Squash, coconut and cumin soup

For six bowls:

1kg (2 ¼lb) squash

6 red onions

4 cloves of garlic

1 3cm (1in) thumb of ginger

1 medium sized red chilli

50ml (1 ¾ fl oz) sesame oil

2 tsp cumin seed

½ tsp fennel seeds

1 tsp turmeric powder

1 ltr (1 ¾ pints) coconut milk

250ml (9 fl oz) water

Salt and cracked black pepper

½ cup fresh coriander leaves or ¼ cup fresh tarragon leaves

Peel the squash, onions, garlic and ginger and finely slice them and the chilli.

Heat the oil almost to smoking and add the chilli, garlic, ginger, cumin and fennel.

Fry on a fairly high heat, stirring constantly for 1 minute.

Add the squash and fry for a further 4 minutes, stirring occasionally, then add the squash and turmeric and turn down the heat.

Sauté for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, then add the coconut milk and water and bring to the boil.

Turn down the simmer for about 15 minutes until the squash is soft.

Remove from the heat and allow it to cool before blending to a fine purée in a liquidiser. Test for seasoning and add salt and cracked black pepper.

Reheat just before serving and stir finely shredded coriander or tarragon leaves through it as it goes to the table.

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Squash bread

400 ml milk
500g squash, peeled and diced
800g strong flour
20g fresh yeast dissolved in
50 ml warm water
1 tsp sea salt

Put the diced squash and milk in a pot and bring to the boil with the lid on.

Cook until the squash is tender, remove the lid and boil until the milk is reduced by half. Allow to cool in a bowl until lukewarm.

Add the yeast, dissolved in the water and mix well.

Add all the flour and salt and knead for 5 mins. The dough should be moist but not sticky, add more flour if necessary.

Leave in a warm place to double in size.

When risen, punch the dough down with your fist and divide into 2 lumps of equal size. Roll each piece into a long sausage shape and place on baking parchment on a baking sheet. Again leave in a warm place to double in size.

Turn the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas4. Brush the dough with warm water and sprinkle with a little coarse sea salt, then place in the top half of the oven.

After 20 mins, test loaf by tapping on the bottom.

Remove and cool on wire racks.

Pickled Pears

6 Asian pears
500g sugar
250ml white wine vinegar
1tsp whole clove
1tsp allspice
7cm cinnamon
750ml water

Peel, core & cut pears into 8 slices

Cover with water and boil for 5 minutes

Strain off and measure liquid

To 600ml add the sugar, vinegar & spices and pour over the pears

Simmer until the pieces are cooked & translucent (20-30 minutes)

Pour into a bowl and leave overnight

Drain off liquid next day into a wide shallow pan and boil for 5 minutes

Pack pears into warm sterilised jars with spices

Pour in boiling syrup until the pears are covered

Seal while warm & store for a month before using

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Hot Apple Chutney

4lb cooking apples
4 tbsp salt
1/2pt vegetable oil
2" piece root ginger, peeled & grated
1 head of garlic, peeled & finely chopped
4 tbsp white mustard seeds
2 tsp fenugreek seeds soaked in water & drained
30 black peppercorns
4 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp chilli powder
4 tsp turmeric
4 fresh green chillies, deseeded & chopped
1/2pt cider vinegar
1/2lb sugar

Sprinkle the apples with salt & set aside

Heat the oil in a pan, add the ginger & garlic and fry gently until just brown

Add the mustard, fenugreek seeds, peppercorns, cumin, chilli powder, turmeric & chillies and fry for a few minutes, stirring well

Add the apples, vinegar & sugar and continue to simmer over low heat for 30 minutes until the chutney has thickened and the apples are soft & pulpy

Leave to cool, then pack into warmed sterilised jars

This chutney improves better with age

Blackberry Ice Cream

450g blackberries
150g unrefined granulated sugar
1/2 lemon juiced, strained
2 tbsp blackberry liquor
500ml double cream

Pick over the blackberries, transfer them to a colander and sluice them thoroughly with cold water

Drain & turn out onto double thickness of kitchen towels; spread out the berries & leave to dry

Put them in a food processor or blender add the sugar and blend for 1 minute

Position a nylon sieve over a bowl and strain the blackberry pulp, rubbing through until all is left are seeds

Flavour the puree with the lemon juice and blackberry liquor.

Taste & add more lemon juice if needed

Chill in the fridge

When ready add the cream and either still or stir freeze and store.