



Cooking Demonstration Recipe by Francesca Zito

July 6th, 2013

Refrigerator Pickled Zucchini and Cucumbers

A group of students from the Lakeport Library's Summer Literacy program came to the market to experience "Reading is Delicious". All the students brought along a jar and we filled them up with pickled goodness to take home. Here's what we did....

Shopping List

1 extremely large zucchini
1 Red Torpedo onion
2 Diva cucumbers
2 Lemon cucumbers
Sugar
White vinegar, 5% acidity
Salt and Pepper

Water

Clean mason jars and lids

LCFF Vendor Who Provided Produce/Product for Recipe

Morgan Valley Farms
Morgan Valley Farms
Sky Hoyt Specialty Grower
Sky Hoyt Specialty Grower
From your pantry
From your pantry
preferably kosher salt / freshly ground pepper
Use spring water if your tap/well water does not taste good or smells of chlorine/sulfur
From your pantry

Notes

Wash and preferably sterilize the jars and lids by placing in boiling water. If you have a dishwasher, that will do. You will not be canning in the traditional sense. These pickles are just placed in the refrigerator and are good in about 2 days and are better in 2 weeks. Use within a month. If you open the jar and don't use the entire contents then top off with additional vinegar, water, salt and sugar to keep remaining vegetables covered.

Directions

Prepare the vegetables, washing any residue or dirt off of them. The zucchini was one of those baseball bat sized squashes so we cut it in half first to make it manageable. Save the other half for the next recipe if you have one of these escapees in the garden. For the zucchini and the Diva cucumbers you will be cutting them into spears/batons. The Lemon cucumber will be sliced into rounds or wedges depending on the size. The onion is sliced into rounds.

To get the right length for the spear/baton, grab your jar and lay it along side the zucchini/Diva cucumber so you can estimate the length you will need to fit the spears of zucchini into the jar. They should be about a 1/2" to 3/4" shorter than the top of the jar. Cut the vegetable into lengths then halve lengthwise so you can scoop out the seedy middle part. Slice the zucchini into spears/batons about 1/2" thick. To stuff the jar, I lay it down on it's side so all of the spears/batons stacks nicely, tilting it up when they won't all lean over. Once it is nicely packed you can add the vinegar, water and spices

Now for your brine. The ratio of vinegar to water is 2/3 vinegar to 1/3 water into the jar. The liquid should come within a 1/4" of the top of the jar, easily covering the contents. Add about 1-2 teaspoons of salt and about the same of sugar plus a few grinds of pepper. Put the lid on, give it a shake and then taste the brine. Adjust adding more salt or sugar to your taste. It should taste like pickle juice does with that salty, sweet, acidic flavor.

Place in the refrigerator for preferably 2 days up to two weeks, then eat! As this has not been heated in any way, eat sooner than later. And as noted in the notes, keep any unused portion topped off with additional brine.

For the sliced or wedged cucumbers, I like to alternate layers of red onion with them so it looks pretty in the jar. Again, pack tightly. I would stop about 1" from the top of the jar so that the pickles will stay covered in the brine.

Variations

Add any spices you would like, dried and whole spices work best. To heat it up, add red pepper flakes. Typical pickling spices include mustard seed, celery seed, whole peppercorns, whole allspice, whole juniper berries and whole cloves. You could try fennel seeds and star anise pods. Switch up the vegetable and vinegar -cut carrots into sticks and use apple cider vinegar with the cloves and maybe some ground cardamom and ginger.

Suggested Wine Pairing

Accompanied by some cheese and cured meats, the pickles make a great appetizer for cocktail hour. So try with a gin and tonic on these hot summer days or how about a white wine spritzer (but keep the spritz at no more than a quarter of the mix and make sure both wine and club soda are icy cold!).



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Zucchini Pasta

What to do with the escapee zucchinis that are big and beautiful!

Shopping List

1 extremely large zucchini
1 small yellow onion
2 medium large tomatoes
Tuscan Olive Oil or similar
Balsamic Vinegar
Sugar
Salt and Pepper

LCCF Vendor Who Provided Produce/Product for Recipe

Morgan Valley Farms
Sky Hoyt Specialty Grower
Sky Hoyt Specialty Grower
Chacewater Olive Co.
Chacewater Olive Co.
From your pantry
preferably kosher salt / freshly ground pepper

Directions

Peel the zucchini, discard the skin. Continue to use your peeler, by peeling the zucchini's flesh into long 1" wide slices which will become your "pasta". Place the "pasta" into a bowl and set aside.

Chop the tomatoes and place into a bowl keeping all the juice. Dice the onion.

In a large 12" skillet or sauté pan, over medium heat add 2 T. of olive oil and the onions, cooking until translucent. (Note: When I'm cooking I typically use a generic organic olive oil and save the nicer olive oils for salads and finishes). Add the zucchini "pasta" plus a good drizzle of olive oil, a generous sprinkle of salt, a small sprinkle of sugar plus a few good grinds of pepper and sauté for about 7 minutes. Add the tomatoes, their juices and 2 T. of balsamic vinegar. Simmer for about 5 minutes. Taste for doneness and seasoning. Adjust to your preferences. Serve up and as Lidia Bastianich says, "make it glisten" with a drizzle of that yummy Chacewater olive oil.

Variations

Add some fresh herbs to the mix – basil, tarragon, oregano, parsley. Sprinkle with some red pepper flakes when you add the tomatoes to add some heat. Use different colored tomatoes. Try it with garlic vs. onions.

Suggested Wine Pairing

As this is a fresh sauced pasta, try a lighter red such as Grenache or a smooth Merlot

Super Easy Fresh Fruit "Tart"

A no bake dessert that is beautiful and tasty. Thank you fresh summer fruits!

Shopping List

1 loaf of Cinnamon Raisin
Orange Walnut bread
2 red fleshed plums
2 apricots
2 nectarines
6 large strawberries
1 package of plain, Chevre
Dark Honey
Tuscan Olive Oil or similar
Salt and Pepper

LCCF Vendor Who Provided Produce/Product for Recipe

Lori's Main Street Bakery

EGB Farms
EGB Farms
La Violetta Farms
Cerro Negro Farm
Yerba Santa Goat Dairy
Wildcat Bees
Chacewater Olive Co.
preferably kosher salt / freshly ground pepper

Directions

Cut the loaf of bread horizontally about 1" from the bottom so that you have a base for your tart. This one base will serve approximately 4-6 people. If you need to serve more, keep slicing otherwise use the remainder for toast.

Prepare fruit by slicing in half, removing stone pits and making thin wedges. Remove stems from strawberries and slice thinly.

In a bowl mix about 1/4 cup of the chevre with approximately 1 T. of honey and 2 tsp. of olive oil. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt and a grind or two of pepper. Mix thoroughly. Mixture should be like spreadable cream cheese.

Spread bread "tart" base with the chevre mixture and arrange fruit in concentric circles alternating colors. Drizzle with honey. Serve!

Variations

For another layer of flavor, spread the bread with Natilla also by Yerba Santa for a caramel essence. Add finely chopped walnuts sprinkled over the top for crunch.

Suggested Wine Pairing

A late harvest Moscato or Riesling would work well!