

One of the very nicest things about life is the way we must regularly stop whatever it is we are doing and devote our attention to eating.

-Luciano Pavarotti and William Wright, *Pavarotti, My Own Story*



Welcome back to the 2nd season of Lopez Evening Meals at School! We've made it through another busy summer so let us take an evening to gather, eat a home cooked meal, reconnect with our neighbors, and share stories of guests, gardening, and other summer adventures.

As Jean and I sit to write this September 'fresh sheet' we are curious to know your thoughts about our monthly hand out. Do you enjoy the verbiage on the front page and recipes on the back? Would you prefer just the recipes? Would anyone like to contribute thoughts and ideas about growing, harvesting, sharing, and eating locally produced sustainable foods? We realize that this newsletter has the potential to be a valuable forum for community discussions and we welcome and encourage your suggestions.

In other news, I (Kim) will be attending Slow Food's Terra Madre gathering in Turin, Italy during the 3rd week in October. Terra Madre brings together more than 6000 food producers, cooks, educators, and students from all over the world to discuss, share, and promote small scale, traditional, sustainable food production. As a representative of the Lopez Food Community I would love to carry with me your stories, questions, concerns, and visions relating to our local food culture. Please feel free to contact me before October 21st in person or at kimabast@rockisland.com.

Since I'll just be returning from Italy the day before our next dinner, October 30th, the crew from Vita's will be joining Jean in the kitchen. We look forward to bringing new energy and ideas to the table. Please come and enjoy the fruits of our collaboration.

This month food producers are Ken and Kathryn from Horse Drawn Farm who contributed onions, potatoes, carrots, green beans, zucchini, tomatoes, basil, and marjoram. Todd and Diane of T&D Farms brought garlic, zucchini, tomatoes, and green beans. Christine from Lopez Harvest brought us fennel, basil, and chard. Strawberries came from Elf and Eric of Crowfoot Farm, tomatoes and lettuce from Steve and Michele Heller, Edi Blomberg contributed green beans, and cabbage, sorrel, and a variety of herbs came from the gardens of Jean and Kim. We are grateful for our usual sources and also encourage all gardeners to consider selling us any surplus produce for the upcoming Lopez Evening Meals at School.

The Lopez Evening Meals at School have been a gratifyingly successful combination of conviviality and local food. We are continually grateful for the generous patronage and support that makes these meals possible as we work together to achieve a financially sustainable and transparent endeavor. The Evening Meals would also not be possible without the willingness and exuberance of our spirited volunteers.

It is our pleasure to cook for you once again.
Good eating,

Kim and Jean

Summer Vegetable Soup

Serves 6

2 Tbsp olive oil
2 yellow onion, roughly chopped
3 whole garlic cloves
2 carrots, cut into 1" pieces
2 potatoes, cut into 1" pieces
¼ lb green beans, cut into 1" pieces
2 med zucchini, cut into 1" pieces
½ small head of cabbage, cut into 1" pieces
¼ cup chopped fresh herbs
Salt and pepper to taste

This is a very versatile soup and any garden surplus can be used as a substitute for the above ingredients. Make sure to use assertive vegetables in your broth for more flavor.

To make this soup a bit hardier than a typical summer vegetable soup we made a broth of pureed vegetables rather than a stock.

In a soup pot just cover chunks of potato, carrot, onion, and whole garlic cloves with water and simmer until vegetables are fork tender. Puree or mash broth and season with salt and pepper to taste. More water may be added to thin broth. Briefly sauté remaining vegetables in olive oil and add to warm broth to finish cooking. Just before serving stir in chopped herbs and taste for salt and pepper.

Panzanella Bread, tomato, and olive oil salad

Serves 6

1¼ lb ripe tomatoes
1 large fennel bulb, thinly sliced
1 lb 2-day old rustic bread
4 Tbsp chopped fresh fennel (tops of bulb)
1 sweet red onion, thinly sliced (optional)
10 to 12 large fresh basil leaves, roughly torn
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
¼ cup red wine vinegar
Freshly ground black pepper to taste

Cut tomatoes into small cubes. Toss tomato with sliced fennel, onion, olive oil, and vinegar in a serving bowl and taste for salt and pepper. Cube or roughly tear bread into ¾ inch pieces. Mix bread into seasoned vegetables, add herbs, and toss to evenly distribute dressing. Taste for more salt and pepper and serve.

Salad is best if vegetables are at room temperature for assembly.

Zucchini Spice Bars

Makes 1- ½ sheet pan or 2- 8" by 8" pans

3 cups whole wheat pastry flour
2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp baking soda
1 Tbsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp ground nutmeg
½ tsp each ground cloves and ginger
1 tsp salt
2 cups brown sugar
4 eggs
Scant 2/3 cup vegetable oil
1 Tbsp vanilla
3 to 4 cups grated supper squash

Preheat oven to 350°.

Sift dry ingredients together. Beat together eggs, sugar, oil, and vanilla extract. Beat in dry ingredients and stir in grated squash. Pour into a greased ½ sheet pan and bake for approximately 20 minutes. 8" by 8" pans will bake for about 40 minutes.

1½ cups chocolate chips stirred into batter make a tasty addition.
