
DINER JOURNAL



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SUMMER 2007

ISSUE NO. 4 SUMMER

INTRODUCTION 04

I'd done a great job in the walk-in. I was working nights at Marlow—before Sean or the herb box—and had just recovered the walk-in from the disorderly hands of one of my co-workers. I wandered the restaurant seduced by self-important thoughts. How frustrated one would find me if another bag of greens had suffocated! Positively moonstruck. I was particularly hurt by scattered paper bags that seemed to have once contained freshly foraged mushrooms but had molded beyond recognition.

A few days later I was lunching at Bonita when, in his perfectly lucid tone, Andrew asked me if I had seen a bag of corn mold that had been mistakenly sent to Marlow. He shaped his hands into a small paper bag and I said yes, I had seen that bag. I thought it was rotting wood ears, and I threw them into the garbage. He turned around, patted me on the back, and before walking away, told me I'd thrown away Huitlacoche—the Mexican truffle—and it wasn't likely they'd get it again.

So much for my self-important thoughts. But I'm glad I wasn't loaded with any traumatic guilt or subject to a kitchen's wrath. I really perform my best when I'm foolish. Wild dandelions or fresh huitlacoche appear as they please. In fact, the people around here prize them for being sporadic. These are the conditions in which delicious things grow. - RB

THANK YOU TO KELLY HOLT FOR PHOTO EDITING ASSISTANCE



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One Year In
As store clerks, chefs, writers, restaurateurs, as people we are constantly struggling with and engaged in a dialogue about how to expand. Be it horizons or vocabulary. How we account for and how we are accountable to the world around us. Here at the close of the fourth issue of the Diner Journal, we look back at the hurdles we anticipated falling over and recognize they were not the monumental challenges we expected. Most surprisingly, perhaps, is that we thought it would be hard to come up with ideas we wanted to write on but with each issue our list of future subjects seems to grow with ease. We envisioned the Diner Journal as a periodic cookbook and surely the recipes are still our base but it is the other facets of the journal that have really educated and excited us.

We may not all be sanctioned writers but we greatly appreciate the opportunity to write and really think about what we are navigating in a whole new way. Choosing to write about wild food leads us to hybrids, leads us to the genetic life of plants leads us to the in-balanced relationship between flavor and health leads us to ask more questions of people like Guy Jones. This chain leads us to a better understanding of the incredibly complex world of farming.

The Journal has prodded us to make time to visit and revisit the people we buy from which is truly meaningful when given the difficult task of juggling schedules and running businesses. But these small journeys are what reinvigorate our efforts and allow us to see the biggest picture. It only reinforces the principle that we don't want to go far for our food. Even now in this awful moment when our food supply is in peril we are still blessed by our surroundings and we had better do all we can to support and sustain them. -CF & AD

<i>As we move forward we want to try to include the larger community in our efforts, working with artists and other writers to further expand the view and scope of the Journal. We look forward to what the next year brings.</i>
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BYOB'BBQ

by Mark Firth

The secret of a great barbeque is to keep it simple. "Is that burning or is that barbeque?" should be the common refrain around the sun soaked backyards of America as gallons of lighter fluid, gasoline or cheap liquor are dumped onto mountains of chemically enhanced briquettes that once resembled charcoal.

Raging fires meet meat doused in sauces that are not legally recognized as food: as high in E numbers as calories and more sugar content than a McDonald's fried apple pie. Frozen, pre-formed "beef" patties and hot dogs bear no more genetic relationship to the cow or swine they represent than the old Doberman down the street does to its snaggle-toothed owner.

This is not the barbeque I grew up with. We called it the "braai," which is the Afrikaans word for barbeque. My experience of open fires and cooking is almost as primitive as early man's.

Zambia circa 1972, I am five. My father, Levi jeans cut dangerously high on the thigh, stands at the grill. No shirt, no shoes and no condiments apart from a container of salt with Chinese writing on the side. On the table tower piles of ribs, steaks, pork chops, chicken, garden picked vegetables and that old classic, African boerewors (sausage).

First, a healthy dash of salt on everything (olive oil and butter were just about impossible to obtain.) Then, sausages placed around the edge and everything else in the middle. Steaks got 4 minutes each side then off, pork chops and vegetables next, then chicken, ribs, and sausage. Everything hot, charred to perfection, and delicious. Every last ember doused with a healthy shot of beer to safe guard against any bush fire!

Fast forward to 2007 at my garden in Mastic Beach, Long Island. On the menu, all of the above (slightly upgraded) except the short shorts.

Essentials

Good lighting (Meat rare: good. Chicken rare: bad.)

Good tongs, long handled knife, fork and oven gloves.

Oil can of Fosters Lager, chilled (fire prevention.)

Natural wood coals

Fire starting cylinder (possibly the greatest invention since the bikini.)

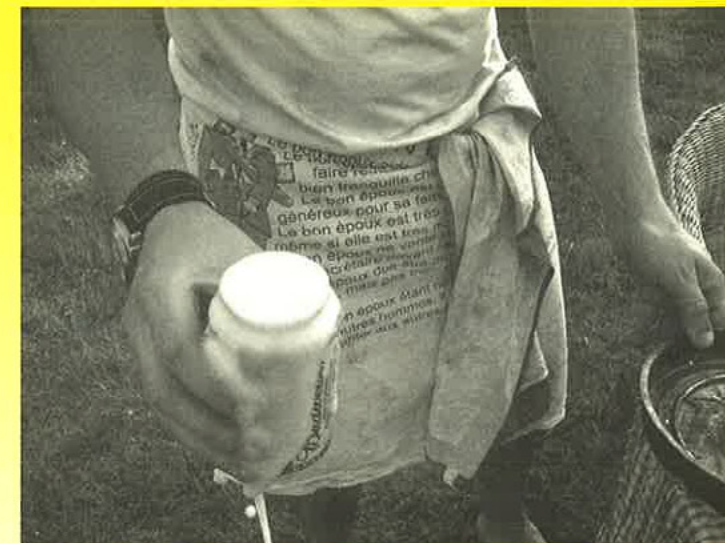
The NY Times Style section, light and lights quickly.

Salt (mix kosher salt with a flaky salt like Malden, which isn't as "salty" but has great texture.)

Freshly ground black pepper

Good olive oil (Trianna is nice and fair trade.)

Simplicity, two vegetables, two meats, one fish.



Produce

Skip the supermarket. You can't throw a kitten without hitting a farmers market these days. Locally grown fresh vegetables, lightly grilled, are a no-brainer: Olive oil, salt, pepper flakes and garlic.

Even King Kullen has grass-fed ground beef. Make your own mini burgers with chopped red onion, a splash red wine vinegar and bobs your uncle.

Beer Can Chicken. Say no more.

Spring onions

Corn grilled, husk on, peel, salt, butter, eat, repeat.

Tasty but not essential: I like to have a pot of water boiling on the side, for clams and lobster steamed and finished on the grill with butter.

BRAII RECIPES

Corn

Place on grill with husks on at beginning of the BBQ. Keep rotating until leaves have almost burnt off (you should have cooked everything else in the meantime.) Baste with butter, salt, etc., etc.

Beer Can Chicken

This should be done before the rest of the grilling. Rub chicken with salt, pepper, olive oil, minced garlic and red pepper flakes. Insert sprigs of fresh rosemary and/or thyme (or whatever herb takes your fancy) into cavity of the bird. Now take a "tall boy" can of Budweiser (I was paid to say that. True story.) Open the can and take a big gulp then crush a clove of garlic or 4 and push them into can. Place the can on to centre of grill and then lift the chicken, legs open, and place on top of the can. Take a picture. Close the lid of the barbeque and leave for 25 minutes or until done (you will probably need to restoke the fire when the chicken is finished.) This is easily done with the magic fire cylinder, but remember to keep it away from small children, animals and drunken in-laws.



Steak

Take your meat out of the fridge at least half an hour before cooking. This ensures an even char on each side. Season liberally with salt and pepper and grill for 4 minutes each side on the hottest part of grill. If you want the fancy diamond pattern (a la Outback Steakhouse) lift the steak off the grill and twist slightly at the 2 minute mark. After cooking let rest for 5-10 minutes.

Pork Chops

Cook as above. Seven or so minutes each side on the cooler area near the edge of grill or until the fat has reduced down and is crispy. I am afraid a little common sense is required here!

Spaghetti Vongole à la grill!

This is a no-brainer for when you have carnophobes visiting. You'll need a bag of cockles from local fish store, garlic, parsley, lemon wedges and dry white wine. Have your trusty sidekick take care of the pasta in the kitchen then place a cast iron skillet on the barbeque with olive oil, garlic and red pepper flakes. Throw in clams, a splash of white wine, a squeeze of lemon juice, cover for 4 minutes. The cockles should be open by then. Now toss the bivalves with the pasta, salt to taste and garnish with parsley and lemon wedge.

Lobster

Place a pot of water on grill. When it's boiling add lobster. Pull the lobster after 8 to 10 minutes and cut it in half with a big knife lengthways. This is messy. Brush butter on the flesh and sprinkle with salt. Now place on grill for 3 minutes. Don't forget to double bag the left-overs. Cats, rats and raccoons love lobster shells!

Zucchini

Do I really need to explain that you cut it into strips and douse with olive oil, chopped garlic, paprika and grill until golden brown? No? Good.

Fingerling Potatoes

First you'll need a cast iron pan with a lid. It doesn't have to match. No one is judging you. Cut a head of garlic in half, slice potatoes in half lengthwise and toss it all with a big bunch of thyme, ground black pepper, rock salt and olive oil. Place in the corner of grill with the lid on and forget about it until dinner.



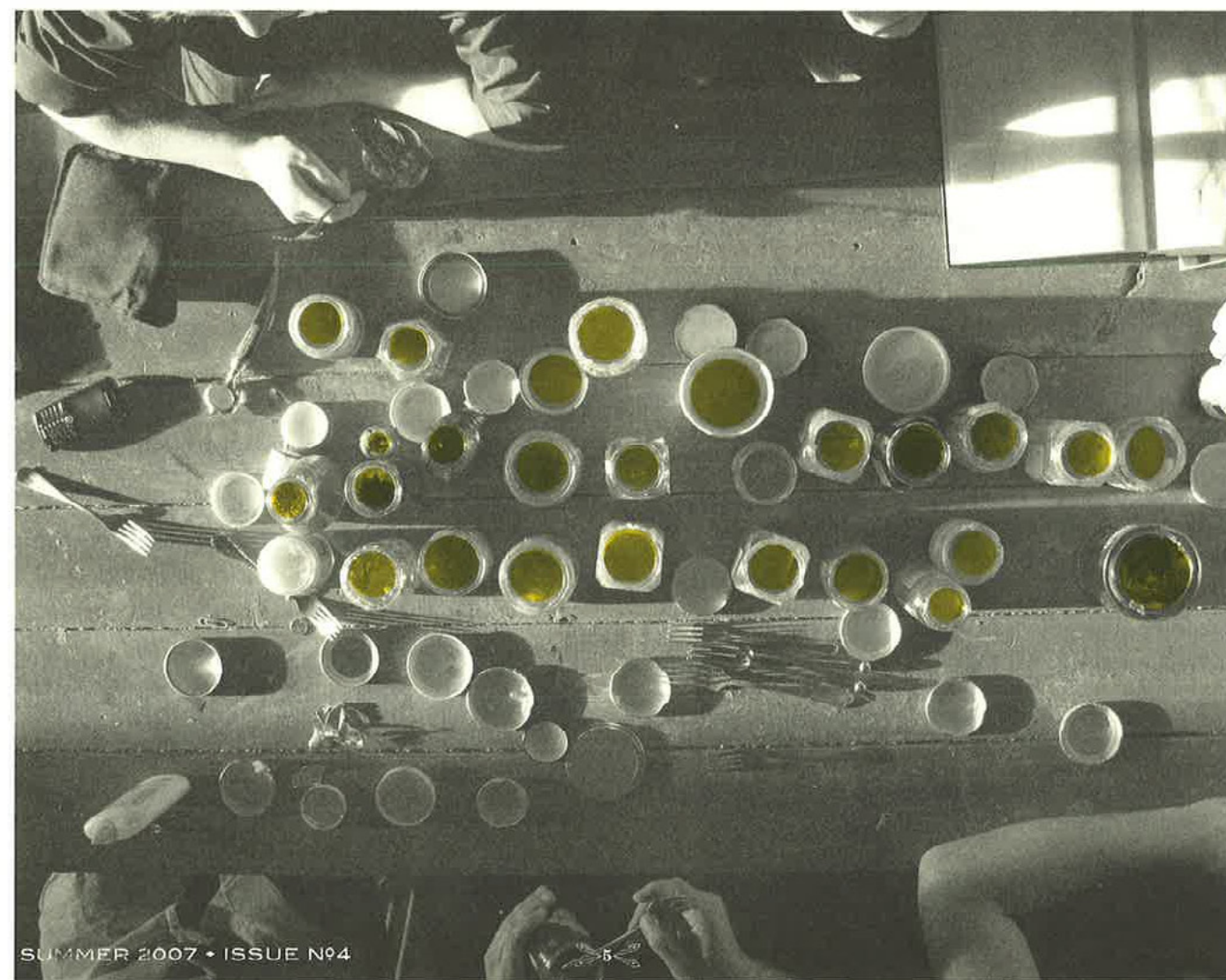
The relationship that the majority of Americans have with honey is one of commodity foodstuff. The contents of the bear-shaped containers that line the shelves of the typical supermarket have been specifically blended for uniform color and a consistent, mild flavor. Few people realize, while shopping for the best price on a 12 ounce squeeze bottle, that some of the most intense and haunting sensory experiences in the whole of the food world come from the singular produce of bees.

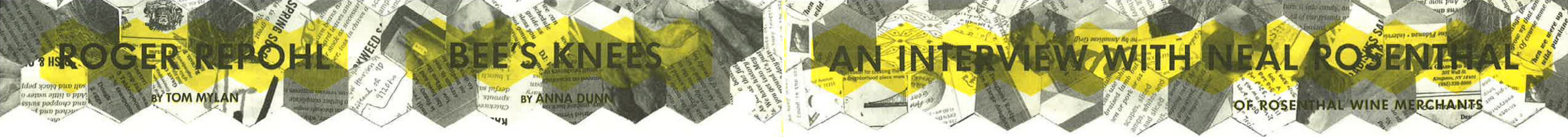
In the same way that wine can sway wildly from aromas and flavors of animal blood to apricot blossoms, honey has the same reach and depth without any of the adulterations possible at the hands of an unscrupulous winemaker. Honey, like wine at its best, is a pure product of its environment. Wine aficionados speak in hushed tones of the concept of "terroir", the idea that wine reflects the soil and microclimate in its sensory aspect. But nothing is as pure a

record of a growing season as the simple, distilled nectar of a week long bloom at the height of summer.

The concepts of vintage and place that are so tied to the way we process the connoisseurship of finely made wines nearly collapse in comparison to the direct ties between sun, earth and plant as expressed through the slow, steady accumulation of complex carbohydrates, laden with ester groups and other volatile flavor components that make up a pure varietal honey. From the delicate mentholated edge of Italian lime blossom honey to the dark, burnt sugar bite of the wild strawberry tree, honey offers its eater unprecedented glimpses of explosive and confounding flavors impossible to recreate in the world's best kitchens.

With this in mind we offer up our musings on one of our favorite indulgences hoping that more people find their way out of the grocery isles and into farmers markets and specialty shops to seek honey for its own sake.





ROGER REPOHL

BY TOM MYLAN

BEE'S KNEES

BY ANNA DUNN

AN INTERVIEW WITH NEAL ROSENTHAL

OF ROSENTHAL WINE MERCHANTS

“Ladies and gentlemen, the Bronx are burning”

Thirty years ago in 1977, during the Summer of Sam, the South Bronx became a poster child for the institutional dysfunction of America's urban environment. Throughout the years between that summer and this one, St. Augustine's Catholic church has been at the center of the South Bronx community around the hill at 167th street and Franklin.

In the years that have passed since the peak of urban blight the members of that community have plowed under the bricks of the burned-out lots left in the wake of the 70's and 80's and planted gardens. Roger Repohl, who tends the garden behind the rectory at St. Augustine's, has been giving advice and support to the gardeners of the parish for years.

In 1999, after hearing some of St. Augustine's parishioners complaining about low yields from their plants that require pollination, like zucchini, Roger worked to discover why this was so. It took a while for to him deduct that there was nothing wrong with the plants, there just weren't any bees in the Bronx to pollinate them. After determining that they needed bees to move the pollen around, he then had to figure out how to talk the church leaders into doing something as seemingly crazy as bringing more than 200,000 bees into the South Bronx.

The church cautiously agreed to allow a few hives to be set up in a small clearing behind the rectory garden and see what happened. Packages of bees were ordered and hives constructed. Meanwhile, Roger set about learning as much as possible about beekeeping as fast as possible.

But this is not simply a tale of urban renewal. It is also a story about honey.

From the clear, straw-colored honey of the late spring Basswood blooms to the dark and earthy produce of early fall, the end product of the bees and Roger's good work is as variable and exciting as the South Bronx itself. The captured flavors of local flowers can convert even the most cynical New Yorker to the idea of eating honey from an urban center. Roger maintains that honey from the Bronx might actually be cleaner than from other, more pastoral, places because it is in the midst of huge city and not subject to the routine spraying of pesticides, fertilizers and fungicides that are a regular occurrence in rural areas.

Eight years later, Roger has four hives in two high-rise stacks that produce over 600 lbs of honey from late May through September, as well as a hive on the grounds of the Bronx Zoo. The community gardens that started the apiary are now more productive than ever, even feeding the bee catching birds at the zoo.

Roger hasn't stopped there. He has mentored leaders of community garden projects in East New York to help them solve the same issues that he was trying to remedy in 1999. In his way, Roger has become as much a pollinator as his bees, spreading the craft of urban beekeeping to the far reaches of the city.

● Honey is a mix of complex sugars and water (nectar) that worker bees extract from flowers. They bring the nectar back to the hive where house bees add an enzyme and deposit it into a cell in the honeycomb. They then fan the cells to evaporate the water, which distills the nectar, and it becomes honey. They fan with their wings, not palm fronds.

● Bees work 9 am to 5 pm and they hate the smell of garlic.

● Most honeybees are female. Their fearless leader is the Queen Bee who is constantly attended to and never leaves the hive. She has a stinger but only uses it to spear other invading Queens.

● It can be reasoned that the term the Bee's Knees, meaning the highest quality, comes from the fact that bees carry pollen back to the hive in sacks on their legs. Although most likely it's was coined in the 1920s as flapper slang for now we're in "business".

● Bees communicate through dance. The round dance and the waggle dance...

● Bee keepers call their bees "the girls".

● Drones or male bees have larger eyes than the rest of the colony. This is so they can spot the Queen when she shoots hundreds of feet in the air. This means she wants to mate. After mating in the sky the drones fall to their death, eviscerated. She returns to the hive.

● Bees have been around for 30 or 40 million years and have changed very little since the time of the dinosaurs.

● Honey comes in many different colors. Even blue from the nectar of sourwood blossoms in North Carolina. It also has antibacterial properties.

● A bee makes up to 154 trips to make one teaspoon of honey and forage in a two-three mile radius from the hive. They visit 5 million flowers to produce a single pint of honey. This is equal to almost 20,000 miles of travel per pound.

● At the end of the honey season the worker bees kick the drones out!

● Bees eat 150 to 200 pounds of honey a year.

● Honeybees are disappearing. Colony Collapse Disorder. They are abandoning their pupa or young in the hive and vanishing. This spells disaster for farms that rely on bees to pollinate almost every crop that grows on a vine.

● Honey is wild.

● Without honeybees we are fucked.

DJ: How did you get interested in honey?

NEAL ROSENTHAL: I first became interested in honey when I encountered Mario Bianco during one of my trips to Piedmont in search of wine. The year was 1982. Mario was a professor at the local university specializing in agriculture. Mario made wine but his passion was his bees. Courtesy of Mario, I experienced my first honey "tasting" in 1982. Before then, I had not understood the complexities and pleasures of honey. Like others I am sure, my consumption of honey was limited, defined by the generic, blended honeys available in general distribution. Mario presented a series of honeys produced from the foothills and mountains of the northwestern Italian Alps (in the Canavese and Valle d'Aosta regions). Each was flower specific and vintage dated. Mario took me on a tour of the region, visiting those zones where the acacia or rhododendron or chestnut flowers bloomed, an itinerary that simulated that taken by the bees during the spring and summer seasons. This was the first glimpse I had of the productive relationship between insect and man.

DJ: How did you find Mario Bianco?

NR: I was introduced to Mario Bianco by my friend and wine producer, Luigi Ferrando. Luigi and his family have been producing the rare and quite noble wine of Carema for several generations and he is not only a supplier but a close friend. He knows everyone in the region that covers the northwestern corner of Piedmont and the southern part of the Valle d'Aosta, an area dominated by the presence of Monte Bianco (Mont Blanc). Luigi and Mario and I spent many hours together in the 1980s exploring the spectacular geography and the flora and fauna of this area. As in every part of Italy, food and wine play an important role in the culture of this place so it was natural that the best producers of wine and honey would come together.

DJ: What made you decide to keep your own bees?

NR: About 13 years ago, my wife, Kerry Madigan, and I purchased an old farmstead with abandoned pastureland in the foothills of the Berkshire Mountains. We were thinking of ways to revive the land which had been planted to hay which was virtually useless to us. We decided to rotate a series of cover crops to put nutrients back into the soil. We started with oats and peas and clover and then converted to rye (planted in the fall) followed by buckwheat (planted in spring.) When reading about buckwheat, I realized that honey produced from the buckwheat flower was highly sought after for its flavor and color and that buckwheat was less and less frequently planted. I decided to take the plunge. It is an homage to Mario Bianco as well.



DJ: Have you gotten any tips from Mario Bianco?


NR: The lessons I learned from Mario have more to do with psychology, temperament, and point of view than tricks of the trade. The most important of these is to respect the bees, to understand their rhythm and their needs, to listen to them, to honor the power and dynamic of the colony. Then, it is important to be in tune with the seasons, to understand the cycle of flowering so that you can produce a single-flower honey. The technical stuff I learned from reading and doing ... and I still don't know very much.

DJ: What makes a distinction between good and bad honey?

NR: The difference between a good and bad honey lies in precision and balance and concentration. It requires a proper balance between sweetness and acidity and it has to retain a low water level. The base product also has to be clean and healthy and ripe. We can't control the weather but we can make sure that the bees are working plants that have not been subjected to chemical treatments and plants that are grown in soil that has proper nutrients. Good honey comes from healthy bees working healthy plants.



To me summer is about eating fish.

It is, of course, also about eating tomatoes and cucumbers but in the non-vegetable world summer equals fish. I like to think that the Diner becomes a little seafood restaurant in the summer. I have always been particularly proud of our ability to give people a quality and well prepared piece of fish. People generally don't seem to eat or prepare seafood at home perhaps owing to the fact that there are very few places to buy good fish and it is something that few restaurants, in my opinion, do well. Aside from the fact that people want to eat lighter at this time of year, the summer is about local fish being in season, plentiful and available at a reasonable price. I'm sure that I am biased being a girl who vacationed in Montauk every summer, but I believe that the best fish are those from our water. Wild striped bass, bluefish, fluke and littleneck clams are the fish to eat right now. Fish is also perfectly accompanied by the produce of summer. Tomato salads, roasted peppers, corn and grilled zucchini are all perfect accompaniments and are all easily prepared. Summer does not require us to slave away in the kitchen. Eating well at this time of year is easy. -CF 



BLUEFISH

Bluefish gets a terrible rap. Everyone who doesn't like it thinks it oily or fishy. I am here to say that if you eat fresh bluefish it is neither fishy nor oily. It is light and even delicate with a texture that simply melts in your mouth. I think the best way to prepare bluefish is to bake it. Baking it emphasizes its delicacy and retains its moisture. Searing it in a pan brings out those things that people might find to be unpleasant about bluefish. Grilling bluefish is fine but it can get dry, losing some of its butteriness.

To bake simply lay bluefish on a sheet tray that has been brushed with olive oil. Season fish with salt and pepper and drizzle with a little more olive oil. Place in a 450° oven and bake until cooked through.

We serve bluefish with summer succotash or corn and zucchini pancakes.

WILD STRIPED BASS

To me wild striped bass is the king of the ocean. A big, beautiful, meaty white fish with a perfect texture and flavor. It can stand up to bold flavors or be treated delicately. I am always proud to have it on the menu. It's our local hero.

CRABS

Nothing speaks of summer like soft shell crabs. They can be found in the spring but they become plentiful and a little more affordable in the summer. They are of course wonderful and a lot of fun to eat fried but if that seems too messy you can easily pan fry them.

To clean crabs: with a scissor, cut the flap from the underbelly then flip up the top flaps above the legs and cut out the lungs.

A word of warning, crabs may pop while cooking as the water inside of them bubbles and bursts. Making dinner is not without it's risks, just be careful and once crabs are in the pan, step away from it until it's time to flip them over.

To pan fry: Place a cup of flour in a bowl and season well with salt and pepper. Heat a large skillet with oil. Season crabs with salt and pepper then dredge crabs in flour, shaking off any excess. When the oil just begins to smoke, place crabs in the pan. Allow to brown on one side and then flip and finish cooking on the other side. If the pan seems too hot and crabs are cooking too fast or charring, reduce heat. Crabs cook quickly, a couple

of minutes on each side and they're done. If they are very large crabs you may need to finish them in the oven. One way to tell if they're cooked is to look under the flap and see that it is opaque.

Batter for soft shell crabs:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 bottle beer
- 2 teaspoons salt
- pepper

Whisk ingredients together and then dip crab into the batter. While holding the battered crab allow as much batter as possible to run off of the crab before frying. You can either deep fry crabs in a dutch oven or pan fry them in about an inch of oil. If deep frying heat oil to 350° and when it's up to temperature place crabs in the oil, when crabs are brown remove them from the pot, drain onto paper towels and season with salt. If using a frying pan heat the oil, to see if oil is hot enough test it by dropping a little batter into the oil. If the batter immediately starts to bubble and brown the oil is ready. Place crabs in the pan and allow to brown, flip and cook on the other side. Drain and season. Serve on a bun with tartar sauce or serve on top of corn relish.

TARTAR SAUCE

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 large shallot, minced
- 1 Tablespoon cornichons, minced
- 1 Tablespoon capers, well chopped
- 1 Tablespoon parsley, minced
- lemon juice
- option: smoked paprika

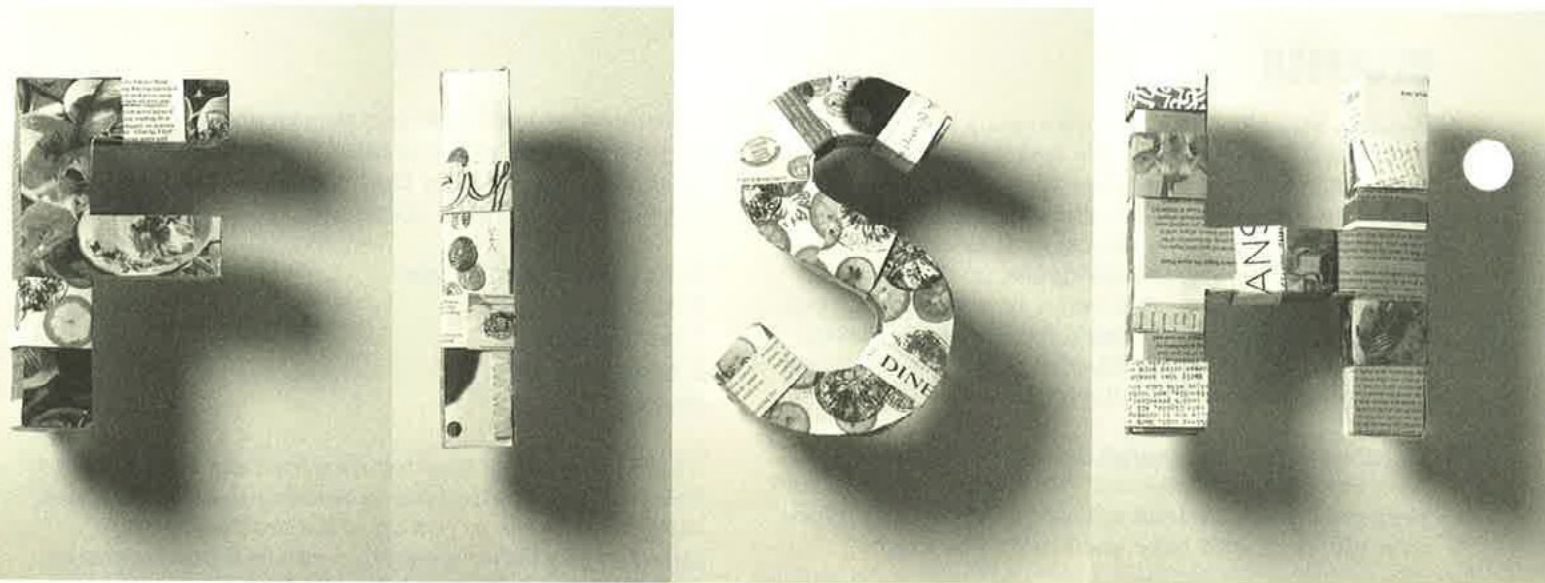
To make the tartar sauce: mix the mayo with the shallots, cornichons, capers and parsley. Season with salt, lemon juice and some juice from the cornichons. Add a pinch of smoked paprika if you like.

To make mayonnaise:

- 1 egg yolk
- 1 Tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 1 good pinch salt
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 lemon

Place yolk, vinegar and salt in the bowl of a food processor. Puree and then slowly add olive oil. If mixture becomes too thick, thin with a tablespoon of water and then continue to add the rest of the oil. Season with salt and lemon juice.





CLAMS w/GARLIC AND TOMATOES

- 2 dozen littleneck clams
- 12 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup white wine
- 2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 Tablespoons butter
- ¼ cup parsley, chopped

In a pot with a tight fitting lid, large enough to hold opened clams, heat the olive oil and butter. Add garlic and sizzle until golden. Add cherry tomatoes, lower heat and allow tomatoes to start to wilt. Add wine and reduce by half. Add clams and place a tight fitting lid on top of pot. Turn up heat and shake the pan allowing clams to open. When clams are open sprinkle with parsley and serve.

CLAMS WITH CHORIZO

- 2 dozen littleneck clams
- 12 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- ½ cup chorizo, diced
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup white wine
- 2 Tablespoons cilantro, chopped

Choose a large pot with a tight fitting lid. Heat the olive oil and add the chorizo, cook for one minute. It will brown and render out some fat. Add the garlic, allowing it to turn golden and then add the cherry tomatoes, lower the heat and allow tomatoes to wilt. Add white wine and reduce by half. Place clams in the pot, put the lid on and turn the heat back to high, shaking the pot as you cook the clams. When clams are open sprinkle with cilantro and serve.

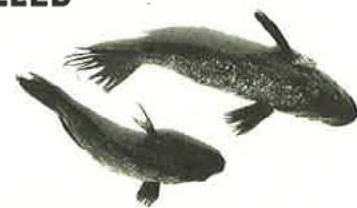
FLUKE AND FLOUNDER

For some reason fluke and flounder rarely appear on restaurant menus, though they are the quintessential white fish. Fluke is essentially a big flounder, and both are small halibuts (very small as that fish can easily be found clocking in at 20 or 30 pounds.) All have a flaky, delicate texture, however the advantages of fluke and flounder are many. The ones that we see coming into our market are local, unlike halibut which is usually from the west coast. Halibut does come from the east coast as well but generally the west coast fish is more readily available and less expensive. As a result the fluke and flounder are extremely fresh. Fresh fluke will have a blue tone to it suggesting it was just pulled from the ocean. Fluke can be large and you can get a nice meaty filet off of it. Flounder is thinner and it can be hard to keep the whole filet intact as you cook it. I like to bake it in the oven or cook it whole. Fluke and flounder are also inexpensive and regardless of price these fish are among the best on any list.

PAN FRIED OR GRILLED WHOLE FLOUNDER

- 1-2 pound flounder
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- 2 Tablespoons butter
- ½ cup white wine
- 2 Tablespoons capers
- 2 Tablespoons parsley, chopped
- 3 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Take the whole fish, skin, head and all and season with salt and pepper on both sides. Heat a skillet large enough to hold the whole fish with olive oil. When oil is smoking place the fish in the pan top



side down. Flounder are bottom feeders, their face is on the top side of their bodies and their bottoms are white. Cook the flounder on high heat until the skin browns. When brown, flip the fish with a large metal spatula and finish cooking in a 450° oven for about 8 minutes or until fish feels firm. Remove fish from the oven and take it out of the pan and onto a platter. Place cherry tomatoes in the pan with 1 tablespoon of butter, season with salt and on medium heat allow them to wilt. Once the tomatoes are wilted deglaze pan with white wine, add the capers and another tablespoon of butter, allow the wine to reduce until it no longer tastes of alcohol and all of the flavors have mixed, add parsley. Pour over the fish and serve with some lemon on the side.

Flounder can also be cooked whole on a grill. Generously rub the fish with olive oil and then season it with salt and pepper. Place the fish on a hot grill and cook until brown and cooked through on both sides. The skin of the fish will probably char a little on the grill which is perfectly fine and even delicious. If it gets too dark before it cooks through you may not be able to eat the skin but sometimes that happens on the barbecue. You can make a salsa out of the cherry tomatoes, capers and parsley by mixing them with salt, olive oil and lemon juice.

FLUKE FILET w/CHERRY TOMATOES AND CAPERS

You can prepare fluke similarly to the flounder above but since fluke is a larger fish you will not easily be able to cook it whole. Figure on a 6 ounce portion of fish per person. Heat a pan with 3 tablespoons olive oil when smoking add the seasoned fluke filets. Allow to brown and then flip with a metal spatula finish cooking in a 450° oven. When fish is done remove from the pan and then proceed as above to make the sauce.

CHILLED LOBSTER w/CREAMY POTATO SALAD

I like to think of this as a sort of lobster roll without the bun. The idea being to eat the chilled lobster together with the potato salad to create a lobster salad without actually having to make lobster salad which is no small feat.

- 1¼-1½ pound lobster per person
- 6 medium red potatoes
- 1-2 cups mayonnaise
- 1 Tablespoon dijon mustard
- 2 Tablespoons parsley, chopped
- 2 Tablespoons dill, chopped
- 2 Tablespoons chives, chopped
- lemon

To cook lobster: Bring a very large pot of water to a boil. Season the water with enough salt so that it tastes like seawater. At a rolling boil add the lobsters to the pot and cover with a lid. Do not overcrowd the pot, if cooking more than 2 lobsters you will probably have to do this in batches. Allow water to come back up to a boil and then uncover the pot and lower the heat to a less aggressive boil for 7 minutes. Remove lobsters from the pot with tongs and cool at room temperature until they stop steaming, at which point you can put them in the refrigerator.

Place whole potatoes in a pot and cover with cold water. Add a good amount of salt to the pot. Bring potatoes to a boil and cook until they can easily be pierced with a knife. Drain and cool at room temperature. Once cool enough to handle but ideally still a little warm, dice the potatoes and dress with a generous amount of mayonnaise (see recipe page 9) and a tablespoon of mustard, you want this to be loose and very creamy as it is also a sauce for the lobster. Mix in the herbs and season with salt and pepper. Add some lemon juice if the mixture needs a little brightening up.

Serve the lobster whole, well chilled with potato salad and lemon wedges.

GRILLED OYSTERS

- oysters
- tabasco
- cold beer

I don't know if you can call this a recipe. Buy a lot of oysters, they go down easy this way. Scrub oysters well with a vegetable brush. Keep well chilled until ready to use. Heat a barbecue grill and place oysters on the grill. When oysters just start to pop open take them off the grill, remove the top shell, shake some tabasco on the oyster and eat it out of the shell. You don't want to really cook the oysters, there should still be some juice in the shell and the oysters should be plump rather than dried out. To avoid overcooking them do them one round at a time for as many people as are participating. Serve with beer.



Farming, Flavor and Wild Foods

by Kate Huling • illustrations by Ivy Hickam • spore prints by Derick Holt

Lambsquarter, wild ginger and stinging nettles are acrid, earthy, spicy and potentially painful to eat. They are, in fact, a little unpleasant. It is no wonder we have gone to such extreme measures to cultivate our food over the past millennia. Compare purslane, ramps or fiddleheads to the cultivated cherries, corn and tomatoes that our ancestors painstakingly took from their sour, wild beginnings to their sweet and juicy present state.

For many of us it is hard to believe that edible foods still exist out in the wild. Even growing up in rural Vermont it never occurred to me to venture into the woods to find something green and untouched by human hands to eat.

My personal introduction to these found foods was ironically after I moved to the city. My doctor recommended that I regularly eat lambsquarter, "the most nutritional thing on earth." When I asked where I could get some of this miracle food she replied, "oh, anywhere, by the side of the road." What a shock. There was something far better for me to eat growing in an empty lot than anything I could get at a grocery store.

Wild plants have let natural selection lead their evolution. They thrive in soils that are best suited to their needs. Because they have evolved without our watering and pruning they are naturally stronger, able to dig deeper into the dirt to search for water and nutrients. They only grow in soils that have not been abused and depleted by chemicals. Each plant requires tremendous effort from the soil to be strong and to produce fruit. This effort is accomplished primarily with help from worms, microorganisms as well as the rich humus. Microorganisms and worms break down the different minerals that the plant needs, make pathways to the roots for the water to travel through, break up the soil to let oxygen in and nourish the plant with their rich castings. Humus is a massive molecule that holds 50 + different minerals (phosphorus, nitrogen, potassium, calcium, etc.) and the water for the plant so that they are there whenever the plant may need them. These fortuitous greens are subsequently more nutrient dense foods.

From wild plants came a wide variety of offspring. Over generations men and women have taken wild foods and, in a process of human assisted natural selection, transformed them into a version of what we recognize and eat today. Those plants, cultivated by saving seeds with the most desirable qualities, are heirlooms. It is touching to read stories about immigrants arriving in America with their most prized seeds in their pockets. Prior to the end of the second world war and the advent of industrial farming practices heirloom seeds were the only seeds that existed. Heirloom plants coexisted with wild foods and both were essential to the human diet.

Since the 1950's most of the seeds that are produced on a large scale are hybrids and, more re-



Wild'n Out

by Tom Mylan & Anna Dunn • photos by Tom Mylan

It's Mother's Day Sunday, 2007 at 11:45 in the morning. Steve "Wildman" Brill is explaining the dangers of eating poisonous wild plants by playing the familiar notes of the funeral dirge with his clapping hands and open mouth, an instrument he calls the "Brillophone." It's going to be a long afternoon in Central Park.

We're here to attend one of Brill's monthly tours, scouring the park for edibles. Wildman has been gleaning from NYC parks since 1982 and, apparently, wild food is an idea that appeals to more New Yorkers than ever. Today there are 40+ city folk who paid the \$12 "suggested donation" to follow a man in a pith helmet around.

Even though restaurants will pay good money for choice items like Hen-o'-the-Woods mushrooms, foraging is not at all milk and honey. Hunting for wild food is a time consuming and uncertain craft, one that can drive the inexperienced to dirty water hot dogs and freezer-hardened ice cream from a cart.

Earlier in the month we found ourselves in eastern PA, stalking mushrooms. Wild food is such a romantic idea: mountain men in greasy buckskins showing a young and downy greenhorn how to live off the fat of the land. Casey, the facilitator of the Lancaster

County Co-op is our mountain man, who has essentially lived in these woods since he was a kid.

"You know what our problem is? We lack Morels."

"That's not true, I'm actually a morel." "This is taking forages."

Mark is having this entire conversation by himself. The trees of Lancaster, PA are towering and create a luminous, light green canopy. We have been walking through the undergrowth for what seems like hours because it has, literally, been hours.

Casey, whose t-shirt reads, "will hunt and forage for food," moves through the wild ginger and land apples like a guerilla. He is the physical embodiment of concentration, his eyes scanning the ground with the steady gaze of a surveillance camera.

We fan out, glue our eyes to the ground and try to tune Mark out.

Back in Central Park, Wildman leads us over a large rock that we might have easily walked around. On the other side are some scrawny, spiky plants. Their leaves taste a little like waxy sour apple skins. He says they are called the cat's briar or "blasphemy briar because they have thorns



and when you fall into them...well, you know." We all look at each other.

"Who can tell me what this tastes like?" After a long pause someone in the back shouts, "Grass!"

Back in Pennsylvania, it's mid-afternoon and Casey hasn't said much all day except to briefly describe the various culinary uses for wild garlic and garlic mustard. We know to look at the ground around the dead or dying trunks of the poplar tree for the odd, pale shape of white morels. After an hour-and-a-half of solid, fruitless search it seems like more than we can handle.

Now Brill is holding a mushroom the size of a serving platter. "What fruit does this smell like?" An orange? A mushroom? Lemon Pledge? Whispered guesses lull their way through the crowd. We pass huge, leathery dryad's saddle mushrooms around and hold them to our noses inhaling as deeply as we can, in pursuit of a correct answer.

"Watermelon!" Wildman exclaims. No one in earshot has guessed right.

The sun moves across the tops of the poplars and we are fading fast. Hope and enthusiasm has turned from tedium to desperation to everyone bitching about lunch. Casey is still focused and, to our sleep deprived minds, it is inspiring. We head up a steep hill bee-lining for every dead tree.

"Ha! Brains!" Mark boasts from the crest of the hill.

We all turn dubiously toward Mark and his prized walking stick. He's pointing to the ground.

And sure enough there is the tiny wrinkled object of our desire, the lone morel. It's impressive and surprisingly solid and hefty. We all take turns holding it in our hands and soaking up its details, hoping to acquire what Casey calls "mushroom goggles."

A few frantic minutes later Cheffie finds a second, tiny morel. Our hunt is reminiscent of descriptions of the life of Civil War infantrymen: long periods of tedium punctuated by short moments of furious action. After another 40 minutes without more morels we head back to the cars and our lunch of left over sandwiches and freshly picked greens.

Our tour of duty in Central Park is not as uneventful. Between near misses with joggers, poisoning scares and an impromptu "Brillophone" solo with a jazz trio playing along a main path, we have little time to contemplate man's place in nature. In the end, with a small sack of mushrooms in tow and the dazzle of the sun in our eyes, we wander away from the group to forage for mojitos and shade.

Walking through the woods with Casey is an actual eye opener. There is so much there. When asked if he ever gets lost in the forest, Casey responds, "No, but I wish I did." This is probably a similar sentiment for us in the five boroughs, navigating the same trains and tunnels everyday.

What is truly engaging about foraging with Casey

is watching him process and interact with a data set that is just beyond our line of vision. The ability to see the forest not just as a place to take a hike, but also to live and eat is something that seems as lost to us city dwellers as the raucous flavors of the food we are seeking here.



cently, genetically modified. These are certainly not chosen for flavor or healing properties but rather for durability, uniformity, resistance to pests and shelf life. Gone are the days of choosing varieties that epitomize flavor, sweetness and juiciness. The varieties of today's commercially produced fruits and vegetables are born for marketability and low cost production for the farmer.

Some consumers might notice that commercially grown produce doesn't taste like much of anything. It's a lot to ask that anything taste good given current farming practices. Modern large scale farming involves a reliance on petrochemical pesticides, fertilizers, fungicides, the planting of crops in monocultures and over tilling. These practices destroy the humus, worms and microorganisms busily working underneath the surface of the soil and therefore render it devoid of vital minerals and nutrients. A plant growing in rich soil is naturally able to defend itself from pests, and produce fruit. Once we take the nutrients out of the soil this cycle of reliance on chemicals is initiated.

To further complicate matters the movement toward large scale organic farms and the reintroduction of heirloom varieties, which seems to be a good alternative to industrial farming methods, comes up short. It's the soil that matters above all and unless organics are coupled with proper care for all of the interdependent systems living in the soil then it is hardly better than conventional methods. Good food is about the soil and the seeds and the person observing and connecting both of these things.

Why is it so necessary for us to go back to wild plants, to start at the beginning? It is when we bite into a ramp just pulled out of damp loam that we taste true sustenance: a flavor that, while harsh and biting, lets us know that we are eating something real and something good. By eating foods that are utterly untarnished by man we can see a better way to grow and a better way to eat. Someday when we manage to rebuild our soils, through care and patience, perhaps we can then plant an heirloom seed and taste something truly sweet and delicious.

Wild Foods

by Caroline Fidanza

Our wild food obsession came out of the spring issue of the Diner Journal when we were trying to understand what was coming into season. We discovered that many of the season's first arrivals are what Guy Jones calls "god's stuff": nettles, ramps, wild watercress, fiddleheads, wild garlic. At that point we set out to do some foraging. We made a date with Casey to go to Lancaster, PA and forage for mushrooms. And what better mushroom to look for than the much-coveted morel?

Driving down to Pennsylvania we were expecting to return with at least a handful, if not bags of mushrooms. Between nine people we found two mushrooms. Foraging for a day makes you realize how blessed we are that someone figured out how to cultivate plants into readily edible food. Those wild foods brought to us from Guy really are the cream of the crop. They are absolutely the most edible plants out there and they taste good with relatively little preparation. What's really out there on a warm day in early May when you're looking with your own eyes is a whole different story.

But the reason why someone like Guy has these wild things in such abundance is because of the quality of his soil.

MARINATED MUSHROOMS

- 1-2# mixed mushrooms, hen of the woods, shiitake, oyster
- 4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 2 sprigs rosemary, rough chop
- 6 sprigs thyme, rough chop
- extra virgin olive oil
- balsamic vinegar

Cook each mushroom separately as cooking times may vary, but according to the same method. Clean hen of the woods by removing the bottom of the stem and then slice the mushroom into 1/2" slices. Remove the stems from shiitakes and leave them whole. Remove just the bottom of the stem of the oyster mushrooms and then just pull them apart from each other. Place mushrooms in a bowl and toss with salt, pepper, garlic, rosemary, thyme, 2 tablespoons olive oil and 1 tablespoon balsamic. Roast in a 400° oven until mushrooms brown and wilt. Remove from the roasting pan and place all of the mushrooms in a large bowl, add more olive oil and balsamic so that the mixture is marinated, not dry. Check the seasoning.

He encourages wild things to grow not just because he can sell them without having to plant them, but because he understands that there is an ecosystem to maintain. The wild plants and even the weeds on his property benefit the rest of his farm. Perhaps this is the real treasure of wild foods, that they indicate to us the health of our surroundings.

No one really wanted to eat mustard garlic, wild ginger or land apples while wandering through the woods of Pennsylvania. We are not accustomed to these foods any longer, no matter how good for us they may be. Just as we are learning to appreciate the benefits of local fruits and vegetables, we find out that it's not enough; now we have to eat weeds. In the end, it is enough. It's just important to know how wild and cultivated edible plants fit together.

As far as mushroom hunting, don't go with a group because once you find them there won't be enough to share. Casey went back to our spot the next day and found about 13 morels, just enough for him to have a nice dinner. Fortunately, we don't have to hunt for our food every day. We can buy cultivated mushrooms, and sometimes they're so good you can imagine that they're wild.

MUSHROOMS w/Herb Butter

- 1/2# Yellow oyster mushrooms, chanterelles, or morels
- 1/4# plus 2 Tablespoons sweet butter
- 2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 Tablespoon parsley, minced
- 1 Tablespoon shallot, minced

Soften 1/4# butter at room temperature. Mix parsley and shallot into butter either with your hands or a spatula. Heat a skillet and add the remaining 2 tablespoons butter and the olive oil. Add mushrooms, season and saute until they wilt. Once wilted add 1-2 tablespoons herb butter allowing it to melt but not cook. Serve.

STRING BEAN SALAD w/BACON AND SHALLOTS

- 1# string beans
- 4 shallots, thinly sliced
- 4 slices thick cut bacon, cut into lardons
- 1 clove garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 Tablespoon dijon mustard
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar
- 2/3 cup extra virgin olive oil

Clean string beans by removing the stem end with a paring knife. Bring a large pot of well salted water to a boil. Blanch string beans in boiling water just enough to maintain some crunch but without any lingering rawness. Plunge cooked beans into an ice bath, when cool drain beans in a collander. Stack strips of bacon and then cut them into thin 1/4" strips. Brown bacon in a skillet. Once brown strain the bacon and then add some of the bacon fat back to the pan to brown the shallots in the bacon fat. Once shallots are brown toss them and the bacon lardons with the string beans. Place garlic, mustard, red wine vinegar and a pinch of salt in a jar, stir with a fork to incorporate. Add olive oil, place lid on jar and shake vigorously. Dress the string bean mixture with the vinaigrette. Season with salt and fresh ground pepper.

STRING BEAN SALAD w/POTATOES AND PESTO

- 1# string beans
- 4 red potatoes
- 1 bunch basil
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1/4 cup pinenuts
- 1/2 cup parmesan
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- lemon

Clean string beans by removing the stem end with a paring knife. Bring a large pot of well salted water to a boil. Blanch string beans in boiling water. Cook the beans for this preparation a little longer than you might otherwise, beyond the crunchy stage but not until they turn grey. You want the beans to be soft. Plunge cooked beans into an ice bath, when cool drain beans in a collander. Meanwhile place potatoes in a pot and cover with cold water and season with salt. Bring to a boil and cook until potatoes are easily pierced with a knife. Drain and cool.

Prepare pesto according to the recipe on page 19. Toss string beans and potatoes with pesto. If pesto is too tight loosen with olive oil. Season the mixture with salt and freshly ground pepper and a squeeze of lemon.

CUCUMBER, YOGURT SOUP w/CORRIANDER AND CILANTRO

- 8 cucumbers
- 1 large tub (17.6 oz) greek strained yogurt
- 2 Tablespoons coriander seed, toasted and ground
- 1/2 cup cilantro, minced
- 1/2 cup mint, minced

Peel cucumber and cut in half the long way. Scoop out the seeds with a soup spoon and then chop the cucumbers into 1" pieces. Place cucumbers in a blender or a food processor and puree adding as little water as necessary to achieve a smooth puree. Pour pureed cucumber into a large vessel (a stock pot will do) and season with salt. Whisk the yogurt and add to the cucumber puree. Stir in coriander and taste the soup, it may need salt or some acid in the form of lemon juice or white wine vinegar. Allow the soup to sit refrigerated for an hour so the flavors can marry and then taste again. When you are satisfied with the flavor add the herbs and serve. This soup is best eaten on the day it is made.

ZUCCHINI SALAD

- 2 medium zucchini, thinly sliced on the bias
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- 1-2 lemons, juiced
- 3 Tablespoons extra virgin oil
- 2 Tablespoons mint
- pecorino

Wash and slice zucchini as thinly as possible on the bias. Cut onion in half and lay flat on a cutting board, thinly slice onion against the grain (the opposite of what you would do to make rings). Place zucchini and red onion in a large bowl and toss with lemon juice, olive oil and salt. Let marinate for 1/2 hour until vegetables wilt. When ready to serve add mint and shave pecorino on top.



MARINATED PEPPERS

6 large red peppers, or a mix of red, yellow, cubanelle and Italian fryer
4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 Tablespoon rosemary, roughly chopped
3 Tablespoons sherry vinegar
3 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
salt

Place whole peppers in a bowl and toss with just enough olive oil to coat the peppers. Char peppers either on a grill cooking them on all sides until they blacken and wilt or roasting them on a sheet tray in a hot oven allowing them to blister on all sides. Once charred place peppers in a large bowl and cover with plastic wrap until they cool. Once cool remove the stems and peel the skins off the peppers then cut them in half and remove the seeds by scraping them out with a knife. Slice peppers into 1" lengths and place them in a bowl. Add the thinly sliced garlic, rosemary, vinegar and olive oil to the peppers. Season to taste with salt.

PEPPERONATA

4 cups red peppers, thinly sliced
1 cup banana peppers, thinly sliced
1 Spanish onion, thinly sliced
½ cup sherry vinegar
extra virgin olive oil

We call pale green long peppers, that resemble cubanelles but are spicier, banana peppers. You could use cubanelles or any mix of peppers as in the above recipe for marinated peppers. Cut the tops off peppers and slice them off of the core into 4 square-ish sections. If using smaller, flatter peppers, cut in half the long way and slice out seeds and any white core. Cut peppers into thin strips. Heat a large skillet and add 3 tablespoons olive oil, when smoking add the peppers in a single layer, season with salt and allow peppers to brown on high heat, you will probably need to do this in batches. Cook peppers until tender but still a bit crunchy. As the peppers cook add more olive oil as necessary so that the peppers don't dry out and stick to the pan. When peppers are cooked deglaze with sherry vinegar and reduce. Remove peppers from the pan into a bowl. Reheat the skillet and add another 3 tablespoons of olive oil. Add onions to the pan and over medium heat cook until well caramelized. Add the onions to the peppers and season additionally as necessary. Serve warm.

SNAP PEA SALAD w/RADISHES, BASIL AND FETA

4 cups snap peas
1 bunch radishes, sliced
4 oz. good quality Greek, French or Bulgarian feta
12 leaves basil, torn
2 Tablespoons red wine vinegar
2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Clean snap peas by removing the stem end with a paring knife and pulling the string out of the pod as you go. Bring a large pot of well salted water to a boil. Blanch the snap peas in the water for just a minute, you don't really need to cook them. Plunge peas into an ice bath and then strain through a collander. Place peas and radishes in a bowl and dress with olive oil and vinegar. Season with salt and freshly ground pepper. Crumble feta into salad and add basil.

SUMMER SUCCOTASH

1 cup corn, sliced off the cob
1 cup okra, sliced
1 zucchini, diced
1 cup fresh shell beans (if available)
1 cup cherry tomatoes, cut in half
12 leaves basil, torn
¼ cup cream
2 Tablespoons butter
2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Heat butter and oil in a large saute pan. Add the zucchini and okra, season with salt and saute on high heat for one minute. Add the corn and the shell beans, toss with the zucchini and okra for another minute. Add the tomatoes, toss again and then add the cream and lower the heat to a simmer. Season the mixture with additional salt as needed. When the cream is reduced enough so that it is clinging to the vegetables but still saucy, turn off the heat. Toss in the basil, grind some fresh black pepper and serve.

CORN RELISH

4 cups corn, sliced off the cob
2 banana peppers, thinly sliced
2 Tablespoons chives, sliced into ¼" pieces
2 Tablespoons scallions, thinly sliced on the bias
2 Tablespoons sugar
1 Tablespoon salt
½ cup cider vinegar

Slice the corn off the cob. Dissolve the sugar and salt in the cider vinegar. Toss with corn and peppers and let sit for half an hour. Taste and adjust seasoning as necessary. Add scallions and chives.

CORN SALAD w/BASIL AND CHERRY TOMATOES

4 cups corn, sliced off the cob
1 pint cherry tomatoes, cut in half
12 leaves basil, roughly torn
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
1-2 lemons juiced

Slice the corn off the cob. Taste the corn. If it is sweet you won't need to roast it. If it tastes a little starchy lay it out on a sheet tray, season with salt and drizzle with olive oil and roast in a very hot oven (450°) for just a couple of minutes so that the flavor intensifies. The corn will turn a brighter yellow and even brown a little which is okay. Let cool and then toss the corn with the cherry tomatoes, olive oil and lemon juice. Allow flavors to marry adjusting the seasoning as necessary. When ready to serve toss in the basil.

CORN SALAD w/BEETS AND PESTO

4 cups corn, sliced off the cob
4 medium beets, roasted
1 bunch basil
2 cloves garlic
¼ cup pinenuts
½ cup parmesan
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
lemon juice

Wash beets and place in a roasting pan. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and put enough water in the pan to just cover the bottom. Cover the pan with foil and roast in a 400-450° oven until beets are easily pierced with a knife (about 1½ hours). Taste corn and prepare as in the previous recipe as necessary.

To make the pesto: Puree garlic and pinenuts in a food processor or blender. Add basil, parmesan a good pinch of salt and 2 tablespoons olive oil. Puree into a rough paste. Remove from the food processor and place in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper as necessary.

Place corn and diced beets in a large bowl. Season with salt, olive oil and lemon juice. Stir in pesto and mix well.



COCKTAILS

PEACH SWIZZLE

2 Tablespoons peach puree
crushed ice
1½ oz. calvados or brandy
½ oz. lemon juice
sparkling wine

To make peach puree: slice up 4 ripe peaches and place in a pot with 2 Tablespoons sugar. Simmer until peaches fall apart. Cool and puree. Place 2 Tablespoons peach puree, brandy and lemon juice in a cocktail shaker or large glass add the crushed ice and stir everything together. Pour into a collins glass leaving an inch to top off with sparkling wine.



CHEFFIE

Anise hyssop is a wild flower, it has a tall stalk and a long, cone-like purple flower. You can find it at a farmers market. It also makes wonderful ice cream.

½ oz Anise Hyssop syrup
2 oz gin
½ oz lemon juice
Fresh anise hyssop leaves
maraschino cherries

To make the syrup: Heat 1 cup sugar and 1 cup water in a pot. Add a few sprigs of anise hyssop to the pot and simmer until sugar dissolves. Steep until mixture tastes very anise-y. Cool.

Chiffonade (finely slice) fresh anise hyssop leaves. Place anise syrup, leaves, gin and lemon juice in a cocktail shaker with ice and shake. Strain into a martini glass and garnish with a maraschino cherry.

PEACHES & WINE

ripe peaches, sliced
chilled white wine or rosé

Slice peaches into wine glass, approximately ½ peach per glass. Pour wine over peaches. Drink wine and when your glass is empty eat peaches and refill.

OLD LADY

2½ oz Lillet
½ oz Lavender syrup
2 oz soda water

To make lavender syrup: Combine 1 cup sugar and 1 cup water in a pot. Add a small bunch of lavender and simmer until sugar dissolves. Steep lavender in syrup until proper flavor is achieved. Pour Lillet and lavender syrup into a wine glass. Top off with soda and ice.

SANGRIA

Sangria can be a complicated mixture of wine, brandy, citrus juices and fruits or it can be something as simple as the above peaches and wine. Use what you have and experiment until it tastes good. If you make a really good sangria it can have extreme drug-like effects. This is the ultimate goal. For a summer sangria, use the stone fruits that are in season, peaches, plums, apricots, even cherries. In the fall use apples, pears and grapes.

2 bottles rosé or white wine
½ bottle brandy (it does not have to be fancy)
a combination of fresh squeezed lemons, limes and oranges
mixed seasonal fruit

Chilled Red

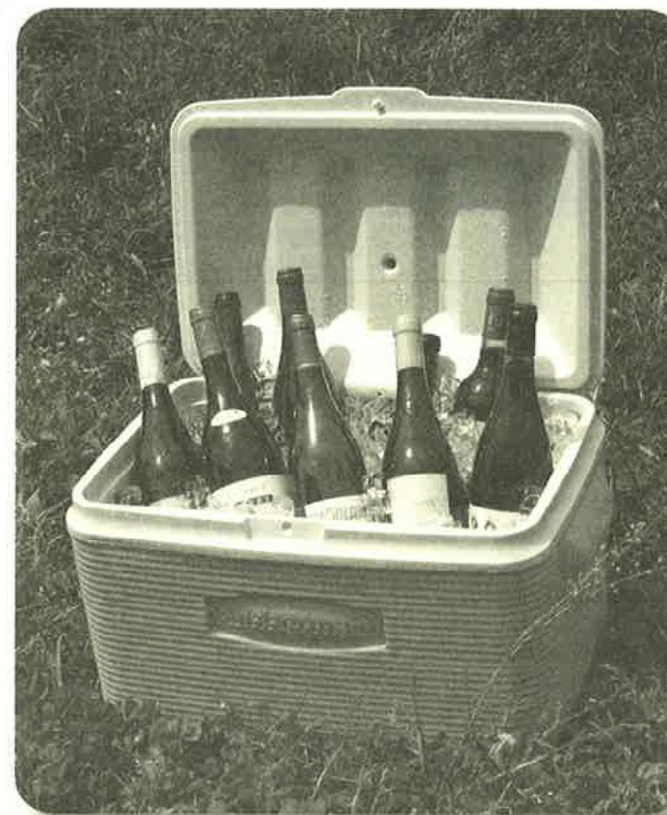
By: N. Rosen

Summer is upon us. With hot, muggy days rapidly approaching some adjustments to our wine drinking habits are necessary. Fortunately the world has discovered the endless fun that is Rosé, and those of you who only drink white wines really have no reason to change your routine. The real loser of summer is the consummate red wine drinker. I can think of nothing more off-putting than swilling down a dry, tannic Bordeaux or a big gamey Rhone while suffering from mild heat stroke.

For those of you determined to drink red wine throughout the summer, might I suggest cooling your red wines down? Most red wine is typically served too warm to begin with, generally red wine should be served somewhere around 60-65F, a bit cooler than your average room temperature, especially in a New York summer. If you must drink your monster cabernet or fruity Shiraz at the beach house, put it in the fridge for 20 minutes before serving (don't worry, if it starts out a bit cold, it will only get warmer.)

For the more adventurous, there are red wines that have traditionally been served quite chilled. Typically these reds display fresher fruit flavors, low tannin, and higher acidity – compositions that lean towards those of white wines. Serve them a tad warmer than your average white wine, around 50-55F. In most cases removing the bottle from the fridge or the ice chest about 10 to 20 minutes before serving them should do the trick.

The beauty of drinking wines that lend themselves to chilling, is that they tend to be quite affordable. Generally, these wines should be light-bodied, with possibly a touch of sweetness and maybe a slight sparkling. The following options are a good place to start.



- **Gamay:** Wines made with the gamay grape are the most common to be chilled. All wines from Beaujolais are made with this grape. Good examples can be found in the Loire Valley of France as well.
- **Pinot Noir:** Be careful here. I wouldn't necessarily drink a Grand Cru Burgundy straight out of the fridge, but more basic Pinots from around the world are great chilled. The best chilled Pinots tend to come from cooler climates like the Loire (Sancerre Rouge, Menetou-Salon Rouge), Germany, Austria, and Alsace. Look for the interesting Bourgogne Passetoutgrains, a traditional blend of Pinot Noir and Gamay.
- **Loire:** Most red wines from the Loire Valley work quite well with a chill.

While there is a diverse range of options here, the most

common wines you will find are from Chinon, Bourgueil, and Anjou. A good wine merchant should be able to point you in the right direction.

● **Jura:** This lesser known French region, near Switzerland, produces interesting reds from the Poulsard, Trousseau, and Pinot Noir grapes (interest has increased in recent years but you still might have to work a little to find them.) Most of the reds come from Arbois – also look for the rare but interesting wines from Bugey (both sparkling and still.)

● **the Sparkling Reds of Italy:** Lambrusco is the most notable example. There are also some good examples from Lombardy and the Piedmont. Lambrusco tends to be a bit sweet. I suggest buying wines from smaller producers. Although rare, wines made with the Fresa grape from producers in Barolo and Barbaresco can still be found – traditional versions are a bit frizzante and very dry.



ZUCCHINI FRITTATA

- 4 zucchini, thinly sliced into rounds
- 12 eggs
- ¼ cup milk
- ¼ cup parmesan
- 3 Tablespoons extra virgin oil

Heat a large non-stick skillet with oil, add zucchini, season with salt, and allow zucchini to brown and wilt. Whisk and season eggs with salt and pepper, add the milk and whisk again. Add egg mixture to the zucchini and lower the heat to medium, add parmesan. With a rubber spatula pull the egg away from the sides of the pan. Either continue to cook eggs this way placing a pan on top of the skillet to flip the frittata then slip it back into the pan to finish cooking on the other side or place frittata in the oven to finish cooking.

CORN AND ZUCCHINI PANCAKES

- 2 cups zucchini, shredded and drained
- 2 ½ cups corn, sliced off the cob
- 2 cups flour
- 2 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 Tablespoon salt
- ground black pepper
- 2 ½ Tablespoons butter, melted
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- butter

In a large bowl whisk together flour, baking powder, salt and some fresh ground pepper. Add the eggs and milk and whisk well to incorporate. Add the melted butter and then the corn and zucchini.

Heat a cast iron skillet or a large saute pan. Place 3 Tablespoons of butter in the pan and when it starts to sizzle ladle batter into the pan. Cook pancakes on medium heat until they brown on the bottom and then flip them and finish cooking on the other side. Serve with tomato vinaigrette.

MARINATED EGGPLANT

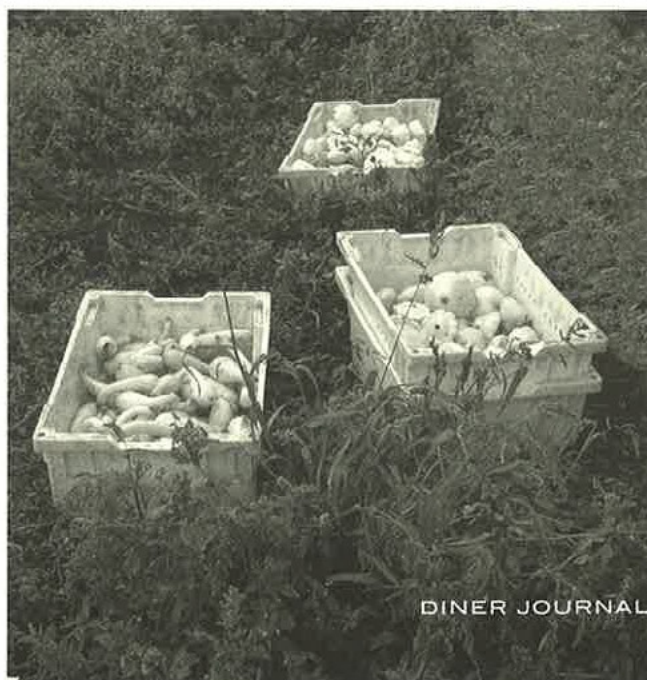
- 2 large eggplant
- 4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup parsley
- 2 lemons, juiced
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flake or chile arbol
- extra virgin olive oil

Peel eggplant the long way in alternating stripes, leaving some skin on. Slice eggplant into ½" rounds, sprinkle evenly with salt and place in a colander to drain for an hour. Shake off eggplant and place on a baking sheet and brush with olive oil on both sides. Roast eggplant in a 350° oven until soft and a little brown. Place eggplant in a bowl. Sizzle garlic in a pan with olive oil until just golden. Add red pepper flake or chili arbol and add to the eggplant. Mix in parsley and lemon juice. Adjust seasoning as necessary.

PEACH SALAD WITH 3 BASILS

- 4 large ripe peaches
- 6 leaves opal basil
- 6 leaves lemon basil
- 6 leaves genovese basil
- 1 small red onion
- 1-2 lemons
- 2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- salt

Cut peaches in half and remove the stone. Slice into ½" pieces. Cut onion in half and thinly slice against the grain of the onion to obtain a more elegant and uniform slice. Clean and pick the three types of basil. Place the onions in a bowl and season with salt. Allow onions to wilt a little and then add the peaches to the bowl. Add olive oil and lemon juice and toss in the basil.



DINER JOURNAL

TOMATO PANZANELLA

- 6 cups very ripe beefsteak or mixed heirloom tomatoes, diced
- 6 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 cup basil leaves, torn
- 4 cups crusty Italian bread, cubed

Mix tomatoes, garlic, olive oil and red wine vinegar in a large bowl. Season with salt and let marinate for at least half an hour but the longer the better. Do not refrigerate. Once tomatoes have let go of their water and the mixture becomes very juicy add the bread and basil. Check for seasoning and either serve immediately so that the bread will still have some texture or allow bread to absorb the tomato juice and become very soft. Delicious either way.



TOMATO VINAIGRETTE

- 4 cups very ripe beefsteak tomatoes, diced
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 12 leaves basil, torn
- 2 Tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

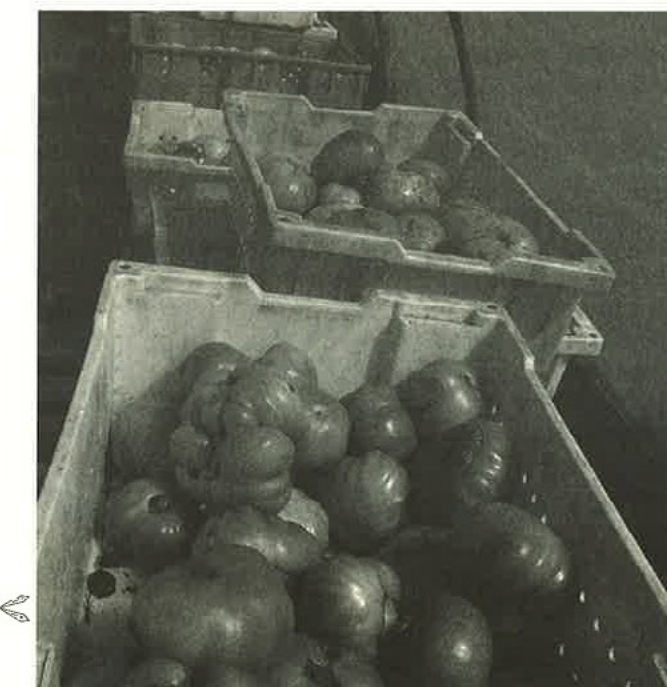
Heat a skillet with 3 tablespoons olive oil and sizzle the garlic until it turns golden. Add the diced tomatoes, season with salt and cook at a simmer until they release their juices and fall apart. Cool tomatoes and puree in a food processor or blender. Place tomato puree in a bowl, whisk in red wine vinegar and then slowly add the olive oil. Adjust the seasoning as necessary with salt and freshly ground pepper. Add cherry tomatoes and basil.



UNCOOKED TOMATO SAUCE á la ANNE FIDANZA

- 5 cups very ripe beefsteak or mixed heirloom tomatoes, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 Tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 24 basil leaves, torn
- 1 pound fettucine or linguine

In a large bowl mix the diced tomatoes, garlic, olive oil and red wine vinegar. Season with salt and let marinate for at least half an hour, the longer the better. Do not refrigerate. Cook the pasta in boiling salted water according to the instructions on the package. Drain but do not rinse the pasta, mix immediately with the fresh sauce. Toss in basil and season with additional salt as necessary. Optionally you can toss in some fresh mozzarella which will melt from the heat of the pasta. Use a pound of mozzarella for a pound of pasta.



DESSERT

SUMMER PUDDING

- 1 loaf white bread, sliced, crusts removed
- 1 quart strawberries, sliced in half
- 1 pint blueberries
- 1 pint raspberries
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 lemon

Place all of the berries in a pot with the sugar and the juice of 1 lemon. On low heat cook the fruit until it releases its juices and becomes very liquidy. Line the bottom and sides of a loaf pan or a ceramic bowl with the bread. Place a layer of fruit on top of the bread and pour over a generous amount of juice, saturating the bread with the juice. Place another layer of bread slices followed by a layer of fruit and juice. Proceed until pan is full finishing with a top layer of bread soaked in berry juice. Cover with plastic wrap and then place a weight on top of the loaf pan or bowl, place on top of a baking sheet to catch any overflow and chill thoroughly in the refrigerator for at least four hours. To serve invert the pudding mold onto a serving platter, slice the pudding and top with fresh whipped cream. If there is any cooked fruit left over you can use it as a sauce.



PAVLOVA with MIXED BERRIES

Pavlova is a meringue and for those of you who hear the word meringue and don't think it sounds like the best possible dessert ever, I understand. Trust me, this is the best possible dessert ever and it's so spectacular you'll feel great after you make it.

For the Pavlova:

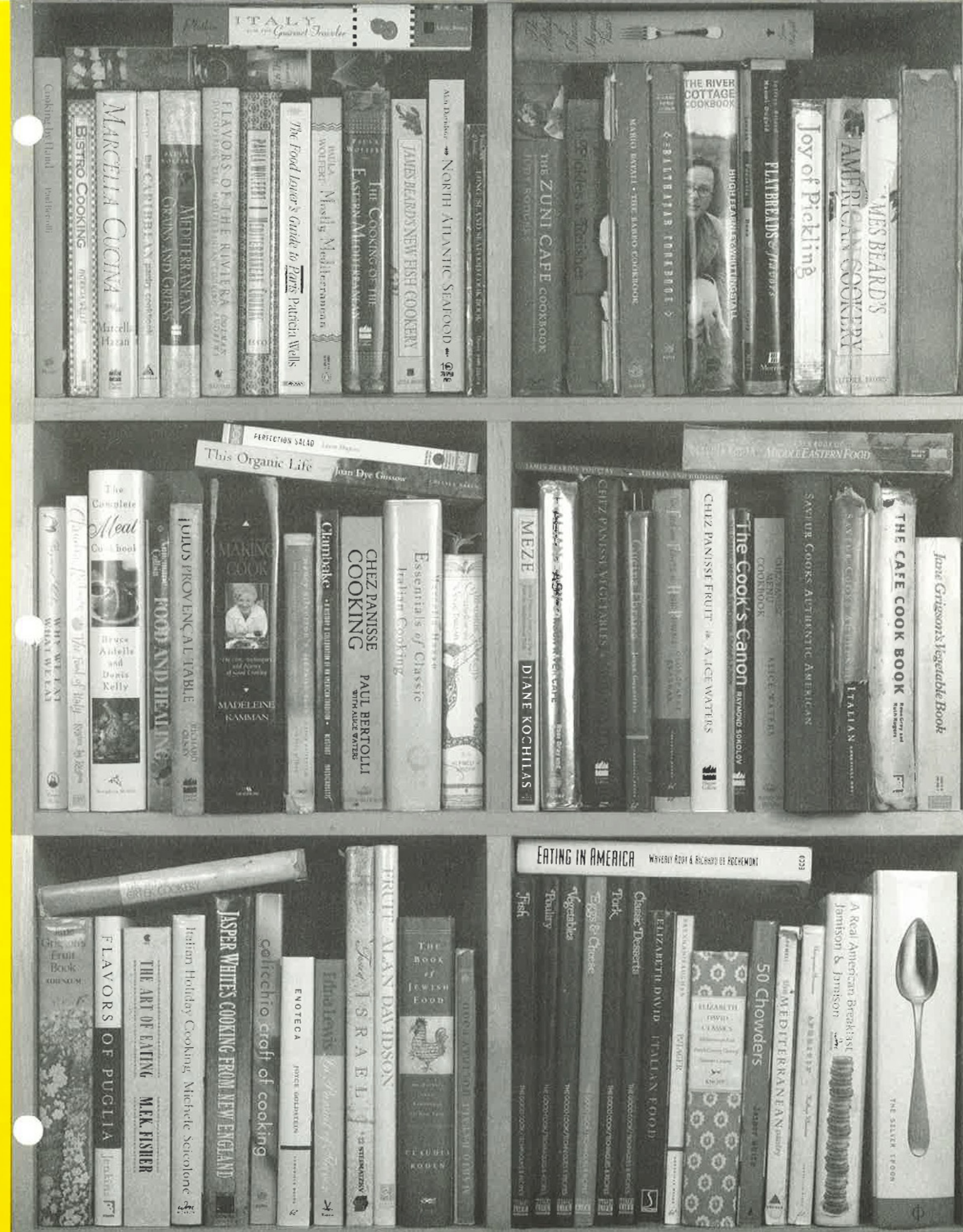
- 8 egg whites
- pinch of salt
- 2½ cups confectioners sugar
- 4 teaspoons cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons white wine vinegar
- drop vanilla extract

Pre-heat oven to 300°. Beat egg whites in the bowl of an electric mixer to soft peaks. Add the sugar and whip until meringue is glossy and stiff enough to hold its shape. Sift corn starch over the egg whites and fold in. Fold in the vinegar and vanilla. Line a sheet tray with parchment paper. With a rubber spatula scrape meringue from the bowl onto the parchment paper. Form the meringue into a 10-12" circle with an indented center to hold the fruit, the meringue is very pliable so you can have some fun here. Place the meringue in the 300° oven and then immediately lower to 250°. Bake for 1 hour or until meringue is firm, no longer sticky. Turn off oven and let meringue cool in the oven.

For the berries:

- 2 pints of mixed berries; strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, it's nice to have at least two different berries.
- ¼-½ cup sugar, start with smaller amount, add more as necessary
- 1 lemon

Mix berries in a bowl with sugar and a squeeze of lemon. Allow to macerate at room temperature. Place fruit and their juice on top of cooled Pavlova. Serve with fresh whipped cream.





HONEY IS WILD