

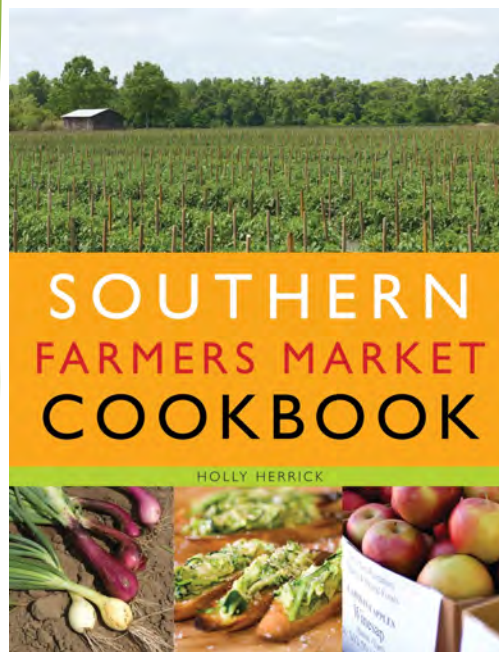
The South Carolina State Farmers Market presents...

Seasonal Recipe Calendar



by Holly Herrick

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A long-time restaurant critic and featured writer for Charleston's only daily newspaper, Holly Herrick has garnered multiple awards for food writing. *Southern Farmers Market Cookbook* features 75 recipes and products grown in South Carolina and other Southeastern states.

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SOUTH CAROLINASM
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All recipes from Holly Herrick's Southern Farmers Market Cookbook

DECEMBER

Spicy Long Island Cheese Squash Soufflé with Warm Rum Cranberry Cream

Ladies, bring your beau or at least a sturdy basket to the market if you're thinking about toting home one of these hefty heirloom pumpkins, which weigh in at around 6 to 10 pounds. You'll find this winter squash will be worth the effort. When cooked, the bright orange flesh is fluffier than pumpkin and sweeter, too. Its background flavor is reminiscent of carrots. A lovely delight, it looks like a large, squashed round of cheese (hence its name) and has a gorgeous tan rind with sage green undertones.

Don't get put off by the lengthy directions in this recipe or the word "soufflé." It's really nothing more than a flavored classic white sauce (béchamel) and mounted egg whites. The keys to success are making sure that the béchamel is not too hot when the egg whites are folded in and that the egg whites are properly mounted. The béchamel can be prepared a day in advance and the egg whites can be mounted within 20 minutes of baking. It will cook while you relax, filling your house and your guests with all kinds of goodness and stomach-grumbling anticipation. And if it falls before its time, don't fret. It will still taste incredible and look great—just more like a pudding than a soufflé.



~ 1 Long Island Cheese squash

For the Sauce

- ~ 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- ~ 1/4 cup dark rum
- ~ Butter
- ~ 1 1/2 cups whole cream
- ~ 1 cinnamon stick
- ~ 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- ~ 1/3 cup granulated sugar

For the béchamel

- ~ 2 cups whole milk
- ~ 1/2 tablespoon grated fresh gingerroot
- ~ 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- ~ 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- ~ 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ~ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ~ Generous pinch of salt
- ~ 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- ~ 1/3 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
- ~ 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- ~ 1/2 cup roasted Long Island Cheese squash, pureed
- ~ 4 egg yolks

For the meringue

- ~ 6 egg whites
- ~ Pinch of salt
- ~ 1/2 cup sugar
- ~ Powdered sugar

Up to several days in advance, roast off the squash, keeping in mind that leftovers can be refrigerated and frozen for later use in soups, custards, etc. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Cut the squash in half horizontally. Scoop out the seeds and discard. Place both halves cut side down on a baking sheet and roast until the squash has softened and collapsed, about 1 hour. Allow to cool. Scoop out the flesh and puree in a food processor until smooth; reserve 1/2 cup for use in this recipe.

On the day of service, begin with the prep for the cream sauce. Combine the cranberries and rum in a small glass bowl. Microwave on high for 1 to 2 minutes; set aside. Preheat the oven about 1 hour before you're going to bake the soufflé. Butter a large soufflé dish generously and rim with a 3-inch-high aluminum collar.

To prepare the béchamel, bring the milk, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, vanilla, and salt to a boil and reduce to a simmer. In a small bowl, add a few tablespoons of cool water to the flour to make a loose paste. Gradually whisk flour mixture into the milk mixture. Reduce heat to medium. Stir until thickened, about 4 minutes. Remove from the heat and whisk in the sugar, butter, and roasted squash until smooth. While still warm, but not hot, whisk in the egg yolks, one by one, until incorporated; set aside.

In a very clean, large metal or glass bowl, beat the egg whites gently with a whisk until frothy. Add salt and, with an electric beater, beat on high until soft peaks form. Gradually add the sugar and continue to beat until firm peaks form. Whisk one-third of the meringue into the béchamel base. Delicately fold the second third into the mixture and repeat with the remaining meringue. Gently spoon mixture into the prepared soufflé dish. Place in the center of the oven on the lower rack. Turn heat to 375 degrees and bake for 50 to 60 minutes, or until firm but springy to the touch.

While it's baking, finish the sauce. Combine the soaked cranberries and rum with the remaining sauce ingredients in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil and reduce to a simmer. Cook until the liquid is reduced by half, about 30 minutes. Remove cinnamon stick and keep warm over low heat. When the soufflé is done, serve immediately sprinkled with powdered sugar. Spoon about 1/4 cup of the sauce over each serving.

Serves 8

All recipes from Holly Herrick's Southern Farmers Market Cookbook

JANUARY

Comforting Cabbage Soup

Despite being light on calories and loaded with all kinds of good things including vitamin C, fiber, and antioxidants, cabbage gets a bad, stinky rap. This luxurious-tasting soup will change your mind about cabbage—forever! Sliced green cabbage goes delectably with a long, slow simmer in (preferably homemade) chicken stock and with the delicate touches of thyme, sweet vermouth, and salty ham hock.

Green cabbage stores well for several days to a week, wrapped loosely in plastic and stored in the vegetable compartment of the refrigerator. Be sure to remove any tough central stalks and cut the cabbage into long thin strips (or “julienne”; see *Julienne Know-How*, facing).



- ~ 4 cups chicken stock
- ~ 8 cups water
- ~ 2 ham hocks
- ~ 1 bay leaf
- ~ 1 onion, peeled and finely sliced
- ~ 1 medium head cabbage, trimmed and julienned
- ~ 2 tablespoons butter
- ~ 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried thyme (or substitute 5 sprigs fresh thyme)
- ~ Salt and freshly ground pepper
- ~ 2 tablespoons sweet vermouth
- ~ Fresh parsley, to garnish

Bring the stock, water, ham hocks, and bay leaf to a boil over high heat in a large saucepan. Reduce to a simmer. Cook together for 1 hour, or until the hocks are tender.

Heat the butter and oil together in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. When bubbling, add the onion. Reduce heat to medium and then cook for 5 minutes, or until the onion has just softened. Add the cabbage, stir to coat, season with thyme, salt, and pepper and cook until wilted, about 10 minutes; set aside.

After the stock has finished simmering, remove the ham hocks and bay leaf. Set them aside. When the hocks are cool enough to handle, trim out any lean, pink flesh, cut thinly, and set aside. Pour the cabbage mixture and trimmed pork flesh into the stock, bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, and cook about 30 minutes, or until very tender. Add the vermouth, verify seasoning, and continue cooking for another 8 minutes. If you've used fresh thyme sprigs, be sure to remove the tough stalks at this point. Garnish with a sprinkle of finely chopped fresh parsley and serve immediately.

Serves 8

FEBRUARY

Hearty Sausage and Northern Bean Soup with Kale

If you get your hands on some fine artisanal sausage and a fresh bunch of kale, bring it together with some dried beans (substitute navy or lima beans if desired) from your farmers market pantry for this satisfying, Tuscan-inspired meal in a bowl. You can cut cooking time way down by using canned beans, but I prefer the texture of dried beans. If you decide to go with canned, drain them very well and add them at the end of cooking so that they heat through but don't break down to mush in the process.

- 👉 1 1/2 cups dried great Northern beans
- 👉 3 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 👉 1 tablespoon salt
- 👉 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 👉 6 links sweet Italian sausage (or substitute another artisanal sausage), sliced into 1/2-inch thick pieces
- 👉 Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 👉 1 onion, peeled and diced
- 👉 4 cloves garlic, peeled and mashed
- 👉 3 tablespoons white wine
- 👉 4 cups chicken stock
- 👉 4 cups water
- 👉 2 tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 👉 Dash of red pepper flakes
- 👉 2 teaspoons herbs de Provence or chopped fresh rosemary
- 👉 Dash of balsamic vinegar
- 👉 1/2 cup orecchiette pasta (or substitute macaroni)
- 👉 1 large bunch fresh kale, all tough stalks removed and cut into thin strips Grated aged Italian cheese (optional)

Rinse and drain the beans. Place in a pot and cover generously with cold water. Add the rosemary sprigs; bring to a boil and reduce to a simmer. Cook until crisp-tender, about 45 minutes. Add the tablespoon of salt halfway through the cooking; drain well. Remove rosemary sprigs and set aside.

Meanwhile, heat the oil over medium-high heat for 1 to 2 minutes in a large, sturdy soup pot or Dutch oven. Add the sausage and brown well, stirring from time to time. This should take about 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove the sausage from the pot with a slotted spoon and set aside.

Drain off all but 2 tablespoons of fat from the sausage; add the onion and garlic. Season with more salt and pepper and cook over medium heat, stirring until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the wine. Stir up any brown bits on the bottom and reduce the wine by half, about 2 minutes. Add the stock, water, tomatoes, reserved beans, and reserved sausage. Bring to a boil and reduce to a moderate simmer. Cook for about 5 minutes. Add more salt, pepper, red pepper flakes, herbs de Provence, vinegar, and pasta. Cook until the pasta is al dente, about 10 minutes (depending on the type of pasta you use). Finish with the kale, stirring it into the soup until just wilted, about 2 minutes. Taste and adjust seasonings if needed. Serve immediately with grated aged Italian cheese, if desired.

Serves 10–12

MARCH

Creamy White Turnip Soup with Spring Onions and Roasted Garlic

By all means, give these creamy white turnip orbs (some varieties come with a pretty purple blush) a try. Pulled fresh from the ground, an increasing army of turnip hybrids available at farmers markets are light years away from the pungent, tough, waxy, longstored turnips that formerly gave turnips an unglamorous reputation.

This soup is delicately feminine, ever so elegant and one of my personal favorites. The salty bite of prosciutto nicely counters the sweetness of the onions and turnips. Save the turnip greens for a quick sauté in olive oil with a bit of garlic and serve it alongside.



- ~ 1 head roasted garlic
- ~ 1 bunch (about 4 cups) white turnips, trimmed, peeled (outer layer discarded), and cut into 2-inch cubes
- ~ 1 medium spring onion, root and green top trimmed to 1-inch lengths from the bulb and cut into 8 wedges
- ~ 4 cups low-sodium chicken stock
- ~ Salt and freshly ground pepper
- ~ 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ~ 2 slices prosciutto, cut into thin strips and 1-inch lengths
- ~ 1/4 cup crème fraîche or whole cream
- ~ Green onion tops, to garnish

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Trim the top of the garlic and wrap with foil. Place in the middle of the oven and roast until soft to the touch, about 30 to 45 minutes. When the garlic is cool enough to handle, squeeze out the soft pulp by pressing the blade of a chef's knife against the bulb to release the roasted flesh; discard the papery casings.

Place the garlic, turnips, onions, and chicken stock in a large saucepan. Season lightly with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil and then reduce to a simmer. Cook, uncovered, until the turnips are tender, about 30 to 45 minutes. Remove from the stove and puree until smooth with a handheld blender or food processor. Return the soup to the pan. Add the nutmeg, prosciutto, and crème fraîche. Bring to a boil and reduce to a simmer, stirring to blend. Taste and adjust seasonings as required. Garnish with a sprinkling of freshly chopped green onions and serve immediately.

NOTE : This soup can be prepared in advance and frozen or stored in the refrigerator. However, if you plan to do so, add the cream just before serving, not before storing.

Serves 4–6

APRIL

Fresh Sweet Potato Ravioli with Sautéed Tat Soi, Roasted Garlic, and Honey-Toasted Walnuts in a Brown Butter Sauce

While fresh pasta and cooking staples like artisanal cheeses, eggs, meats, and other non-vegetable options are increasingly making the rounds at Southern farmers markets, tat soi is in its nascent stage. I've just started coming across it on a regular basis, but when I do, I'm sure to add a bunch or two to my shopping cache. A lovely, buttery, and mildly mustard-flavored Asian green, tat soi is reminiscent of an amalgam of kale and arugula. Fabulous raw or cooked, it adds deep green color and a cornucopia of nutrients and fiber to this hearty and satisfying dish, which is perfect on any chilly day. The inclusion of local honey and orange zest gives it festive, special occasion-worthy flair.



Advance prep

- ~ 1 head garlic
- ~ 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- ~ 1 bunch fresh tat soi, well washed, patted dry, and cut into 2-inch squares (yields about 5 cups)
- ~ Salt and freshly ground pepper

for the walnuts

- ~ 1 tablespoon butter
- ~ 1/2 cup coarsely chopped walnuts
- ~ Salt and freshly ground pepper
- ~ 1 teaspoon wild honey

for the pasta

- ~ 16 fresh sweet potato ravioli (or substitute black pepper linguine, cheese ravioli, or fresh pasta of choice)
- ~ 3 tablespoons salt

for the butter sauce

- ~ 1/4 cup butter
- ~ Reserved roasted garlic cloves
- ~ Salt and freshly ground pepper
- ~ Zest of 1 orange

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Trim the papery top off the garlic head to expose the top of the cloves. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil and wrap the entire bulb with a small piece of aluminum foil. Bake until softened, about 25 minutes. Meanwhile, heat a skillet over medium-high heat and add remaining oil. When just sizzling, add the tat soi, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring, until wilted, about 3 minutes; set aside.

In another medium skillet, prepare the walnuts. Melt the butter in the skillet over high heat. When bubbling and warm, add the walnuts, toss to coat, and season with salt and pepper. Reduce heat to medium-high and cook 2 to 3 minutes, or until the walnuts have begun to turn golden. Add honey and coat; drain the nuts on a paper towel and reserve.

Prepare the pasta according to package directions. Drain the pasta, reserving 2 tablespoons of the cooking water. NOTE : In general, fresh pasta takes much less time to cook than dry pasta. However, it still needs lightly boiled water, plenty of salt, and a tender touch—especially ravioli. Stir with care and be sure not to subject it to a hard boil, which could tear it apart. It's always done when it floats! You can usually count on approximately 4 minutes of cooking time for fresh or frozen ravioli.

To prepare the sauce and assemble the dish, melt butter in a large, deep skillet over medium-high heat until a light, golden brown. Squeeze the roasted garlic cloves out of the roasted garlic head and into the pan; discard the papery skins, and then toss the cloves to coat and brown. Season with salt and pepper and add the zest. Pour the browned butter over the sautéed tat soi and add the reserved 2 tablespoons of the ravioli cooking water and the reserved ravioli. Sauté all together quickly over high heat and toss gently with the ravioli. Serve on a large platter or as individual portions topped with the honey-toasted walnuts.

MAY

Salt-Crusted Oven-Roasted Garlicky Fingerling Potatoes

This recipe is so deceptively simple, yet it came to me, indirectly, from one of Paris' most famed kitchens, La Tour D'Argent, via a friend of mine who worked there for a time. The keys are a good coating of fine olive oil and crunchy sea (or kosher) salt, fresh, juicy potatoes and a high oven temperature. The heat and salt render a gorgeous crust on the outside and a cloud of fork-tender sweetness on the inside of each luscious potato. The knobby crevices of fingerling potatoes work wonderfully to maximize the crusty texture, but any waxy, fresh spring potato will work.



- ~ 3 pounds fresh fingerling potatoes
- ~ 1/4 cup good-quality olive oil
- ~ 2 tablespoons sea or kosher salt
- ~ 5 cloves garlic, peeled and lightly smashed
- ~ 6 sprigs fresh rosemary

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Lightly scrub the potatoes, trimming away any dark spots. If the potatoes are not uniformly sized (and they usually are not), cut the potatoes as needed so that they all are approximately the same size, about 2 inches in length and 1 inch in diameter. Pierce any uncut potatoes with a knife so they will not explode in your oven as they cook! Using your hands, toss the potatoes with the olive oil and salt on a roasting pan, coating evenly. Toss in the garlic and rosemary and arrange all on a single layer in the pan. Bake in the center rack of the oven, tossing the potatoes by aggressively shaking the pan, every 6 to 7 minutes. Cook until very tender in the center when pierced with a knife, about 15 to 20 minutes depending on freshness and size. Remove the rosemary stalks and discard. Serve immediately as these babies are best when they are steaming hot. Served thus, they will literally pop in your mouth.

Serves 6

JUNE

Field Peas à la Provençal

The bright flavors of the French region of Provence—garlic, tomatoes, and olive oil—work surprisingly well with earthy field peas and thin streaks of fresh chard to create this warm and satisfying salad.

- 👉 2 cups fresh field peas
- 👉 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 👉 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 👉 2 fresh tomatoes, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 👉 Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 👉 1/4 teaspoon local honey
- 👉 6 chard leaves, cleaned with stems removed and coarsely chopped
- 👉 Freshly grated aged cheese (optional)

Simmer the peas in a pot of generously salted water until tender, up to 1 hour; drain well and set aside. Heat the oil over medium-high heat in a large sauté pan. Add the garlic and reduce heat to medium-low. Cook until translucent, about 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the tomatoes, salt, pepper, and honey. Cook together gently over medium heat until the tomatoes cook down into a coarse sauce, about 10 minutes.

Add the pre-cooked peas and fresh chard. Cook until the chard has just wilted, about 5 minutes over medium heat. Serve immediately. If desired, top with freshly grated aged cheese.

Serves 4

JULY

Sautéed Flounder

with Fresh Tomato, Corn, and Avocado Salsa

Most fortuitously, the twin beauties of summer—corn and tomatoes—are in peak season at the same time of year. They work beautifully here, bound with the mellow, round flavor of (non-local, sorry) avocado and the milkiness of fresh, sautéed flounder. Though often fried, this fish is superb fresh from a hot pan cooked simply with a bit of olive oil and butter. The salsa can be made ahead since it gains flavor depth over time (up to 6 hours) and the fish is cooked in a flash, making this a cool dish for warm weather dining.



For the salsa

- ~ 4 medium tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and diced
- ~ 1/2 ripe avocado, peeled and diced
- ~ Juice of 1/2 lime
- ~ 3 green onions, vertically sliced and chopped
- ~ Corn kernels cut from 1 ear of fresh, cooked corn
- ~ 4 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- ~ 3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
- ~ 1/4 cup good-quality olive oil
- ~ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ~ 4 saffron threads
- ~ Dash of local honey
- ~ Dash of cumin
- ~ Salt and freshly ground pepper

For the fish

- ~ 6 flounder fillets (about 6 ounces each), skinned
- ~ 1 tablespoon butter
- ~ 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ~ Salt and freshly ground pepper
- ~ Fresh basil, chopped

To prepare the salsa, make the tomatoes easy to peel by submerging them in a pot of boiling water for 30 seconds, then removing and submerging in cold water. This will help the skin peel off; all you need to do is pull it off with your fingers or with the assistance of a paring knife. Gently combine the tomatoes and the remaining salsa ingredients in a medium bowl, folding with a wooden spoon to prevent breaking the avocados; season carefully to taste. Refrigerate and store for up to 6 hours. Bring to room temperature before serving.

Prepare the fish just minutes before serving. Rinse the fillets carefully and examine for any bones that need removal. Pat dry with a kitchen or paper towel. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the butter and oil. Season the fish on both sides with salt and pepper. Place the fish in a single layer in the pan. Cook about 2 minutes on each side, flipping only once. When the fish is golden brown and just opaque in the center, serve immediately with a generous serving of room temperature salsa and a sprinkling of basil.

Serves 6

AUGUST

Yellow and Red watermelon Salsa Over Red Leaf

Lettuce and Smoked Ham Salad

Like tomatoes, watermelons are increasingly showing up at Southern farmers markets in a range of colors and sizes. This recipe puts both the sunny-hued “Yellow Flesh” and bright red “Cannonball” watermelon varieties to good use in a zippy, cool salsa served over a simply dressed salad of summer-seasonal red leaf lettuce and cubes of sautéed smoked ham. Mix and match with whatever local and seasonal watermelon you find. Freshness is always the key, and local is always how to find it.

For the salsa

- ~ 1 cup each cubed “Yellow Flesh” and “Cannonball” watermelon (or another variety), seeded and cut into 1/4-inch cubes
- ~ 10 mint leaves, cut into thin strips
- ~ 3 tablespoons finely diced red onion
- ~ Dash of lime juice
- ~ Salt and freshly ground pepper

For the salad

- ~ 1 head red leaf lettuce, cleaned and gently dried
- ~ 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ~ 1 tablespoon butter
- ~ 1 1/2 cups diced smoked ham
- ~ Salt and freshly ground pepper

For the vinaigrette

- ~ Juice of 1 lime
- ~ 2 tablespoons fresh orange juice
- ~ 1 tablespoon local honey
- ~ Salt and freshly ground pepper
- ~ 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

To prepare the salsa, combine all salsa ingredients in a small bowl and chill up to 30 minutes before serving.

To prepare the salad, clean and dry the lettuce and tear into bitesize pieces. Reserve in a bowl, covered with a damp kitchen cloth, in the refrigerator.

Meanwhile, heat the oil and butter over medium-high heat in a large sauté pan. Cook ham, tossing occasionally, until golden brown on the edges. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside, keeping warm.

To prepare the vinaigrette, whisk together the juices, honey, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Gradually drizzle in the oil, whisking the entire time to incorporate. Taste and verify seasoning; set aside. To assemble, season the lettuce and dress it lightly with the vinaigrette; toss gently to coat. Arrange the greens on serving plates and top with a generous portion of the chilled salsa. Sprinkle warm ham over the top and the edges of each plate. Serve immediately.

Serves 4–6

SEPTEMBER

Sweet and Creamy Summer Squash Casserole

Summer squash casseroles permeate the South like so many beads of August sweat. They're a staple at Sunday supper, alongside a plate of fried chicken and stewed butter beans. In this light version of what's commonly a savory custard-based dish, yellow squash's delicate flavor is amplified by removing excess water with salt. Wine, cream, herbs, and cheese bring it to a fine finish. Select, treat, and store summer squash as you would zucchini (See "Zucchini Picking," page 21).

- 👉 5 yellow summer squash, scrubbed and tips removed
- 👉 1 tablespoon salt
- 👉 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 👉 1 small onion, chopped
- 👉 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 👉 Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 👉 1 tablespoon white wine
- 👉 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 👉 1/4 cup chopped fresh chives
- 👉 1/4 cup grated Swiss cheese
- 👉 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Grate the squash with a medium-size grater over a large bowl. Toss with 1 tablespoon salt and allow to sit for 10 minutes. Squeeze out excess water in batches by forming balls between your hands and squeezing. Discard excess fluid and set aside drained squash.

Heat the oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sauté until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the squash and continue to sauté until just tender and most of the juices have reduced, another 5 minutes or so. Season with salt and pepper. Add the wine and increase heat to medium-high. Cook for 2 minutes, or until the wine has reduced to almost nothing, stirring constantly. Add the cream and reduce the heat to medium. Cook another 5 minutes, or until liquid is reduced by threequarters. Stir in the chives.

Preheat broiler to high. Pour the squash mixture into a 4-quart gratin or baking dish. Allow to cool slightly and then sprinkle with the cheeses. Cook in the middle of the oven until heated through and bubbling on top, about 20 minutes; serve warm. This works as a great side dish for roasted chicken or pork, or as a meal with a green salad.

Serves 6–8

OCTOBER

Soulful Braised Pork

with Fresh Cider and Winesap Apples

Comparing commercially grown apples to those grown and harvested at smaller, sustainable orchards is like comparing apples to, well, oranges. That's because commercial apple growers are frequently forced to pick the apples before they're fully ripe, unlike the smaller orchards (which supply farmers markets), where apples are picked ripe and fresh from the tree. The taste is incomparable. Of the many varieties that make it to market in the fall, the Winesap apple, with its crisp and juicy flesh and high crunch factor, is my frequent apple of choice for eating, cooking, and baking.

In this slowly braised medley of pork and apples, the fruit breaks down into a chunky, sweet gravy spiked with the acidic bite of fresh cider (do not use cider from concentrate!), sage, and rosemary. Pork butt, from the working muscles of a pig's shoulder, cooks down to fork-tender perfection with a long, slow braise that can go on for hours. The scents wafting seductively from the kitchen build an irresistible appetite for a feast.

- 👉 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 👉 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 👉 2 pounds Boston Butt pork shoulder, cut into 2-inch cubes
- 👉 1 teaspoon dried sage leaves
- 👉 Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 👉 1 medium onion, peeled, halved, and thinly sliced
- 👉 2 stalks celery, thinly sliced
- 👉 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 👉 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 👉 2 cups fresh apple cider
- 👉 1 cup water or chicken stock
- 👉 2 Winesap apples, peeled, cored, and cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 👉 3 sprigs fresh rosemary, bound with a string

In a large Dutch oven or crockpot, heat the oil and butter over high heat until bubbling. Add the pork and sage, and season generously with salt and pepper. Brown the pork well on all sides, stirring occasionally, until the meat is colored a deep, golden brown. Remove the meat from the pan and set aside; reduce the heat to medium. Add the onion, celery, and garlic and cook until just softened and translucent, about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Return the browned pork to the pan and dust with the flour. Stir to coat and cook through, about 3 minutes. Add the cider to deglaze the pan. Stir to release all of the browned bits from the pan. Add enough stock or water to cover by a little over half. Add the apples and rosemary and bring to a boil; reduce to a very low simmer over low heat. Cover loosely with a lid and cook until very tender and thickened, about 3 to 4 hours. Remove the rosemary bunch and taste to verify seasonings before serving. (This recipe originally ran in the January/February 2008 issue of *Lowcountry Living* magazine).

Serves 6

NOVEMBER

Curried Roasted Pumpkin

with Lentils

Cubes of pie pumpkin (also known as Sugar pumpkin) bake together with ginger, curry, cumin, lentils, and stock in this meatless hungry-man dish, infusing the house with festive scents of the season. Crunchy toasted pumpkin seeds give added crunch to this recipe, which is loaded with flavor, fiber, color, and nutrients.

- ~ 3 tablespoons olive oil
- ~ 1 large onion, minced
- ~ 4 cloves garlic, sliced
- ~ 1 cup uncooked dark lentils
- ~ 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- ~ 2 teaspoons curry
- ~ 1 teaspoon cumin
- ~ Salt and freshly ground pepper
- ~ 2 cups low-sodium chicken stock (or substitute vegetarian stock)
- ~ 3 cups raw pumpkin, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch cubes, plus reserved seeds
- ~ 1/3 cup currants
- ~ 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley, plus more for garnish
- ~ 1 teaspoon local honey
- ~ 1/2 to 1 cup water, as needed
- ~ Fresh parsley, to garnish

For the toasted pumpkin seeds

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup reserved pumpkin seeds, rinsed and dried
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

Pumpkin-Cutting Precautions

Because of their dense rinds, pumpkins, like all winter squash, are difficult to peel when raw. Do so with caution! It helps to cut the pumpkin in half horizontally, seed it, then cut the pumpkin into long vertical wedges, like you would a melon. From there, pare the rind with a sharp knife and cut into the desired shape.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Heat the oil in a large roasting pan over medium-high heat. Add the onion and garlic. Reduce heat to medium and sauté until softened, about 3 minutes. Rinse the lentils and then add to pan and sauté for 1 minute. Add the ginger, curry, cumin, salt, pepper, and stock. Cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil and roast 10 minutes on the center rack of the oven. Remove the cover and add the pumpkin, currants, parsley, and honey. Depending on their moisture content, the lentils may have absorbed all or most of the stock. If so, add 1/2 cup to 1 cup water to the pan. Cover and continue to cook in the oven another 30 minutes, or until the lentils are crunchy-tender and the pumpkin is soft.

To prepare the pumpkin seeds, melt the butter over medium-high heat in a large skillet. Add seeds and season with salt and pepper. Cook, tossing frequently, until golden-colored and emitting a nutty aroma. Remove from the pan and drain on paper towels. To serve, arrange the roasted pumpkin and lentil medley on a large serving platter or individual plates and garnish with a sprinkle of fresh parsley and the warm, toasted pumpkin seeds.

Serves 6