

**Veggies this week:**  
Mesclun Salad,  
Red Radishes  
Orach or Spinach  
Chervil  
White Carrots  
Green Onions  
Dandelion Greens

Initial Veggie Notes  
from Julia

Salad time! If you like salad make it everyday with a combination of any or all of the following: salad mix, radishes, spinach green or red, chervil, green onions, and dandelions. If you don't like salad that much, make a

simple green salad with the lettuce mix and some chopped chervil with your favorite dressing.

The spinach (green or red) and dandelions can be cooked and eaten as a side dish, with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice, or tossed with hot noodles and red pepper flakes. The white carrots are suitable for roasting and or for soup. You can also slice them into rounds then cook them in a little butter or oil and season with S & P for a simple cooked side dish.

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You're in Luck by Andy Griffin

Imagine what life must have been like in the early spring for your peasant ancestors. (Those of you descended from royalty or with roots in the carefree tropics just bear with me for a minute, please.) The days would be getting longer just as their tempers would be getting shorter from being cooped up in a hut hiding from the cold for too long. Sure, their root cellars would have once been crammed with beets and turnips and their larders stuffed with cured onions, salted meats, pickles, and dried fruits but all that would be nearly gone by the end of March. Their bodies would be craving fresh greens and vitamins. Yes, spring was a time of love and flowers and renewal but any crops left overwintered in the field would be flowering themselves and unfit to eat. Hunger was never very far away in the springtime.

Now look at your vegetable box from Two Small Farms. This week we are bringing you an almost perfect example of what a hard working peasant family could hope to eat during a medieval spring. Radishes grow quickly under spring's cool conditions - only 45 days from planting - so they would be one of the first crops planted after the snow melted or the ground could be worked. Thrifty

peasants ate the greens with as much gusto as they did the roots, perhaps cooking them with a pat of butter and a pinch of salt like turnip tops or maybe throwing them into a broth to thicken it into soup.

Saladings would be the tender baby thinnings from the garden. Big, mature heads of lettuce would come later. Tiny lettuce leaves would be tangled with wild herbs, like chervil, picked from sheltered glades in the forest. Chervil, minced stem and all, could be used as well to bring a fresh flavor to any root crops still around. White carrots, once Europe's only available decorator color of carrot, are exceptionally resistant to bolting to flower which made them an especially important crop in the spring. Carrots would have been left to overwinter in the ground. There were once many local varieties of white carrots available, but the kind in your box is called Küttiger Rübli and was the carrot of Küttigen, Switzerland.

Orach, also called red spinach, mountain spinach, or purple goosefoot, was once upon a time more common than the green spinach we have today, especially in the more northern climates since it is so resistant to cold. Our foremothers would have been familiar with both red and green types of orach. Red or green, they prepared the orach just as we prepare regular spinach today. What we call regular spinach probably looked a lot more like orach back then too, before it was improved for ease of harvest.

Any onions left in the larder would be sprouting by March so the cooks would prepare the sprouts as scallions rather than toss them out. The scallions in your box are actually last year's cull bianco di maggio onions planted out in November to overwinter for harvest this week.

We planted the dandelion greens for you back in November as well and covered them with translucent fiberglass fabric to protect them from the flocks of migrating geese which periodically raid our farm. In the old days the children would have been sent out to the fields to gather wild dandelions from among the grasses. They would have to be quick and look sharp, though, because the flocks of goats they were tending were also nosing through the pastures in search of these mildly bitter and very nutritious greens.

The children would be keeping an eye out for wild strawberries too - and we are closely watching our own berry patch. The recent heat wave has sped things up a bit and we will begin a modest harvest soon, with the main harvest kicking in a few weeks from now.

Now imagine you lived back then and were dependent upon your own garden to survive and

during the night a herd of wild boar tore your whole vegetable patch up and retreated to the forest. I'm betting you'd wish you lived in a future where spring's bounty could just show up in a box and you didn't have to shoulder a spear and go off in the woods to kill a pig in order to survive. You're in luck!

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### Pizza Night in Santa Cruz

Tuesday, March 23rd \*\*4-6pm\*\* CSA Pizzas at Engfer Pizza Works in Santa Cruz

Come eat pizzas made with produce from our farms. The Engfer Pizza Works full menu will be available, and Chef Liz Engfer will also have a special menu with pizzas made from our produce. Cost: Their regular pizza prices, which range from \$10 to \$20...Join us. Special treat: no video games, but there is a ping pong table, our children call it the Ping Pong Pizza Parlor.

### RECIPES

Chervil is the classic herb for flavoring such foods as salmon, trout, potatoes, spinach, and asparagus. Chervil also goes well in salads with other herbs, like dandelion, chives and sorrel.

In the middle ages in Europe, chervil was eaten raw in salads to renew the blood. Many modern herbalists recommend chervil as an aid to digestion. To try it, sprinkle a tablespoon of fresh chervil leaves on a serving of green salad and eat with a meal. (From The Good Herb by J. Hurley)

### RADISHES WITH GOAT CHEESE

1/2 cup soft mild goat cheese, softened  
3 tablespoons heavy cream  
1 bunch radishes with tops  
Garnish: 24 small fresh chervil sprigs

In a bowl stir together goat cheese, cream, and salt and pepper to taste until combined and transfer to a pastry bag fitted with a 1/4-inch tip. (Alternatively, transfer mixture to a small heavy-duty sealable plastic bag and press out excess air. Snip off 1 corner, making a small hole.)

Cheese mixture may be made 2 days ahead and chilled in bag. Bring cheese mixture to room temperature before proceeding. Trim radish tops to 1/2 inch and halve radishes lengthwise. Decoratively pipe mixture onto radish halves.

Garnish hors d'oeuvres with chervil. Makes 24 hors d'oeuvres. Gourmet April 1998

### Dandelion Greens Saute

1 lb. dandelion greens  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
5 cloves garlic  
1/4 cup sesame seeds  
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil

Wash and slice greens. Blanch in enough water to cover about 1 minute. Drain and saute in the olive oil for 3-4 minutes, then add the sesame and garlic and saute for couple minutes more. Add the sesame oil and serve.

### WHITE CARROTS FOR DINNER

Slice white carrots thin into coins. Cook on highish heat with garlic in a bit of oil or butter for a few minutes. Add a dash of honey or sugar if a sweetness is desired.

### ROASTED SPICED SHRIMP ON WILTED SPINACH

6 large shrimp  
1/8 teaspoon chili powder  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
1/2 pound spinach (about 1 bunch)  
2 scallions  
1 teaspoon fresh lime juice  
2 tablespoons water  
1 teaspoon grated peeled fresh gingerroot  
1/2 teaspoon sesame oil

Accompaniment: lime wedges

Preheat oven to 450 F. Leaving shells intact, pull legs off shrimp and with a sharp knife halve shrimp lengthwise. Arrange shrimp, shell sides down, in one layer in a shallow baking pan. In a small bowl stir together chili powder and salt and sprinkle evenly over shrimp.

Discard stems from spinach and diagonally cut scallions into 1/4-inch-thick slices. Drizzle shrimp with lime juice and roast in middle of oven until just cooked through, about 5 minutes.

In a large nonstick skillet bring water with gingerroot to a simmer over moderate heat and add spinach. Cook spinach, stirring, until slightly wilted, about 20 seconds. Remove skillet from heat and immediately stir in scallions and oil until combined

well. Season spinach with S & P. Mound spinach in center of each of 4 plates and arrange shrimp halves around it. Serve shrimp and spinach with lime wedges. Serves 4 as a first course. Gourmet March 1999

Spinach Salad from Chez Panisse Vegetables by Alice Waters

Wash and spin dry tender young spinach leaves. Dress with a garlic and red wine vinaigrette or a Lemon Shallot Vinaigrette, and garnish generously with sieved hard-cooked egg and baguette croutons.

Lemon Shallot Vinaigrette

2 small shallots or green garlic  
2 Tablespoons Champagne vinegar  
2 Tablespoons lemon juice  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Peel and dice the shallots very fine. Put them in a small bowl with the vinegar, lemon juice, and salt. Stir and let the mixture sit for 10 to 30 minutes. Whisk in the olive oil. Makes about 3/4 cup.

CHINESE CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP WITH SPINACH AND scallions, Julia's fast version

2 quarts chicken broth  
8 thin slices fresh ginger root  
1 bunch scallions, cut crosswise into thirds  
3/4 cup Chinese rice wine or Sherry  
2 ounces dried rice-stick noodles  
1 pound spinach cleaned and coarsely cut up.  
2 stalks green garlic or chives, chopped

With flat side of cleaver or knife lightly smash ginger root and scallions. In cleaned kettle bring chicken broth to a boil with ginger root, scallions, rice wine or Sherry and simmer, uncovered, for 20-30 minutes. Strain.

In cleaned kettle bring broth to a boil. Add noodles and boil, stirring occasionally, 2 minutes. Stir in spinach and simmer, stirring once or twice, until spinach turns bright green and is just tender, about 3 minutes. Stir in green garlic and salt and pepper to taste and simmer 1 minute. Gourmet February 1997

BLACK BEAN, SPINACH, AND MUSHROOM BURRITOS Gourmet January 1995

3 green onions, 3 stalks green garlic or one onion, chopped fine  
1/2 pound mushrooms, chopped fine  
1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
1 bunch spinach (about 1 pound), coarse stems discarded,  
washed well and spun dry  
2 garlic cloves  
1/4 cup water  
1 cup canned black beans, rinsed well and drained  
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice  
2 scallions, chopped fine  
3/4 cup coarsely grated pepper Jack cheese (about 5 ounces)  
1/2 cup canned mild enchilada sauce  
two 10-inch or four 8-inch flour tortillas

Accompaniment: Sour cream

In a heavy skillet cook garlic/onion and mushrooms in oil over moderate heat, stirring, until golden. Add spinach and garlic and cook, stirring, until spinach is wilted, about 30 seconds. Stir in water, beans, lemon juice, scallions, pepper Jack, and salt to taste and cook, stirring, until cheese is melted.

In a small saucepan heat enchilada sauce. Heat a dry skillet (large enough to hold 1 tortilla) over moderately high heat until hot. In skillet heat tortillas, 1 at a time, turning frequently, 30 seconds, or until softened, and transfer to a work surface. Divide filling between tortillas and roll up burritos. Spoon sauce over burritos and serve with sour cream.

Green Risotto with Cream and Herbs from Verdura by Viana La Place

6 Tbs. Freshly grated imported Parmesan cheese, divided  
4 Tbs. Fresh cream  
2 heaping Tbs. Chopped herbs- choose from basil, chervil, chives, marjoram, mint, rosemary and thyme  
5 Tbs. Unsalted butter, divided  
1/2 onion, peeled and finely diced or 2-3 green garlic stalks, cleaned as a leek, and chopped  
1 bunch spinach, stemmed, cut into strips  
2 cups Arborio rice  
salt to taste  
6 cups of either beef or vegetable broth

Combine in a small bowl 2 tablespoons of the grated Parmesan cheese, the cream and the herbs. Set aside while making the risotto. In a large heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine 4 tablespoons of butter and the

onion. Cook over low heat until tender. Add the spinach and saute until tender.  
Add the rice and salt to taste and mix well.  
Meanwhile place the broth in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Turn off the heat and leave on the stove, covered. Add enough broth to just cover the rice and stir over low heat until the broth is absorbed. Continue adding broth, a few ladlefuls at a time, until the rice is al dente and the risotto is slightly soupy. Stir in the remaining Parmesan cheese. Off the heat, add the herbs and the remaining butter. Mix well and cover. Let stand for a few moments before serving.

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