

COOKING FRESH



Between September and November, the East End's harvest enters the schizophrenic time between waning summer and coming fall. In fact, it's the most abundant time. The heat stored in the ocean, bays, and sound keeps the land warm longer than in other parts of New York and means that farmers are still pulling eggplants, cucumbers, tomatoes and corn from the fields deep into autumn. The nights get cooler and cause cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, and other cole crops to swell, although this summer's drought means that these crops may be stunted. The first apples are picked, and the pumpkins and winter squash are harvested shortly after, growing in size and selection as we head towards the holiday season. As any avid fisherman will tell you, now is the time of stripers. Bluefish, fluke, porgies, butterfish, black sea bass and other delectable denizens of the deep still abound, but surfcasters and commercial fishers alike are after the cows with stripes. Look for its mild, white meat on restaurant menus and at dinner parties. The cooling days also mean that clams, oysters, mussels, and bay scallops have stopped spawning and their flesh becomes firm and briny.

NOW IN SEASON

PRODUCE

Apples
Beans
Beets
Broccoli/Cauliflower
Brussels Sprouts
Cabbage
Carrots
Corn
Eggplant
Garlic
Greens (Chard, Collards,
Kale & Mustard)
Leeks
Jerusalem Artichokes
Mushrooms (Farmed and Wild)
Onion
Potatoes
Radishes
Winter Squash/Pumpkins
Tomatoes
Turnips

MEAT AND SEAFOOD

Bay Scallops
Sea Bass
Blowfish
Bluefish
Butterfish
Chicken & Eggs
Clams
Duck
Eel
Fluke
Lobster
Milk & Cheese
Oysters
Porgies
Sea Bass
Striped Bass
Swordfish
Tuna
Turkey

POSSIBILITIES

SOUTH INDIAN CAULIFLOWER by Sarah Halweil, Sag Harbor

I'm always craving Indian food, because there are no Indian restaurants on the East End. When I was in college, I waited tables at a South Indian restaurant and I took a few cooking classes from the owner. This recipe combines local produce with South Indian flavors, and it satisfies my craving.

In a large skillet, wok, or sauté pan, cook mustard seed, cumin seed, coriander seed, turmeric, a little cinnamon, and (if you want it hot) chili peppers in olive oil until the mustard seeds begin to pop and the oil takes on the color of the spices. Add chopped onions and garlic, sprinkle with sea salt, and continue to sauté. Add chopped cauliflower and stir as it cooks. (For large amounts of cauliflower, add a bit of water to facilitate cooking.) Test the cauliflower periodically until it's the desired consistency. For a variation, add a little cream or coconut milk, and adjust spices to flavor.

SCALLOPS SEVICHE by Terry and Becky Stern, from *Bridge Hampton Works and Days* (1975)

1 c. lemon and lime juice mixed
1 minced hot red pepper
1 thinly sliced Spanish onion
salt and tabasco sauce to taste

Marinate 1 lb. scallops, preferably overnight in refrigerator. Serve drained scallops on bed of lettuce with toothpicks.

Scorpacciata, *n* : eating a particular ingredient in copious amounts in its period of local perfection.



THE EDIBLE HARVEST: FALL

A COUPLE OF SIMPLE PICKLES

From Vera Gewanter and Dorothy Parker, *Home Preserving Made Easy: A Complete Guide to Pickling, Smoking, Canning, Drying, Freezing and Jelly-making* (Viking Press, 1975). It's a must-have book for any modern-day provisioner.

PICKLED GREEN BEANS

A simple recipe that produces those crisp, crunchy, slightly pickled beans that you often find as snacks on a buffet table, as appetizers, or for back-to-school lunch bags.

1 qt. any variety of green beans	2 c. water
2 cloves garlic	½ tsp. crushed red pepper
1 sprig fresh dill	2 c. vinegar
½ c. salt	

1. Clean and trim vegetables but leave them whole.
2. Sterilize a quart jar and put the first 3 ingredients into it.
3. Combine the remaining ingredients and bring to a boil.
4. Pour the boiling solution into the packed jar to cover the vegetables.
5. Seal and store. Don't use until 2 weeks have passed.

HYDEN SALAD

A tasty 19th-century recipe from Virginia for pickling cabbage.

- 4 qts. finely chopped cabbage
- 4 qts. green tomatoes (whole if small, chopped if large)
- 2 c. chopped green peppers
- 4 c. chopped onions
- 2 qts. vinegar
- 1 lb. sugar (or less)
- 2 tbs. each: turmeric, cloves, red peppers, celery seed, salt, cinnamon, ground or powdered mustard, fresh ginger

1. Sprinkle the four vegetables with salt, mix well, and let stand overnight.
2. The next day, pour boiling water over the mixture, drain and squeeze dry.
3. Mix the vinegar with all the remaining ingredients, bring to a boil, and boil 10 minutes.
4. Put vegetables into sterilized jars, pour in the pickling liquid, filling the jars up to the tops.
5. Cover tightly and store.

WE WANT YOUR RECIPES! Not the ones that are so fancy or exact or complex that no one can make them. We want the culinary hand-me-downs that the whole family knows, the seasonal solutions to too much produce, and the combinations of ingredients that shout out the flavors of the East End. Send to info@edibleeastend.com.



MORE POSSIBILITIES

LONG ISLAND CHEESE PUMPKIN

"It's coming along," said Ken Ettlinger, a local seed saver who lives in Manorville and teaches botany and natural sciences at Suffolk Community College. "It's very slow because we haven't had that much rain. But I do have a couple of the cheeses growing." Mr. Ettlinger was referring to Long Island Cheese Pumpkin, a large, buff-colored squash that resembles a wheel of cheese. The pumpkin—a variety of *Cucurbita moschata* with moderately sweet, deep-orange flesh—has long been revered on Long Island for its beauty and ability to keep long after harvest.

In the late-1970s, when Mr. Ettlinger noticed that the pumpkin was becoming less common in catalogues, he began growing it from fruit he bought at East End farmstands where farmers had begun to save their own seeds. He sold the seed as the "Long Island Cheese Pumpkin" through the now-defunct Long Island Seed Company. Before long, Johnny's Selected Seeds, Seed Savers Exchange, and other catalogues began listing the Long Island Cheese Pumpkin as "an East Coast heirloom long remembered as a great pie squash by people in the New York and New Jersey areas." Growing up on the Island in the 1950s, Mr. Ettlinger recalled hitting the farmstands just before Thanksgiving. "My family would always go to a farm and pick up a cheese pumpkin so mom could make the pie," he said. "If you talk to old timers, if you want to make pumpkin pie you use cheese pumpkin."



A THANKSGIVING PIE RECIPE

by Lynn St. John, from *Bridge Hampton Works and Days* (1975)

Use pumpkin, butternut or acorn squash, or sweet potato. Wash 2 to 3 medium squash, peel and cut into 2-inch slices. Bake squash covered until tender and mash.

To 2 c. of squash add:

¾ cup milk ½ cup honey

3 beaten eggs ½ tsp. salt

1½ tsp. cinnamon ½ tsp. each of ground cloves, ginger and nutmeg

Pour mixture into unbaked 9-inch pie crust and bake for 50-60 minutes at 350 degrees.

ICE CUBE HERBS

by Sherri Brooks Vinton, author of *The Real Food Revival: Aisle by Aisle, Morsel by Morsel* (Tarcher/Penguin, 2005)

A few things to keep in mind when you are "putting by" summer produce. Think small size, big flavor. Focus on compact items, such as herbs, that won't take up a lot of space, but bring a big flavor punch to your dish.

Consider making ice cube herbs. You can use this method to preserve any that you have on hand—delicate things like tarragon, woody ones like rosemary. The leafy ones can be tossed into hot pasta or rice, whirled into a vinaigrette for an easy dressing, blended into sour cream or yogurt for a quick sauce. Add those that are a bit tougher, like the rosemary, or strongly flavored, like oregano, to soups and stews or mix in bread dough.

1. Wash at least one cup of herbs and add to a blender or, if using an immersion blender, put in the 2 cup measure that comes with it.
2. Blend to a puree adding just enough water to keep the blades running. Pour into a freezer tray and freeze.
3. When completely frozen, transfer cubes to a plastic container or plastic bag. Cubes keep, in freezer, for up to 6 months.



A SIMPLE WAY TO COOK A STRIPED BASS (OR ANY OTHER WHOLE FISH FOR THAT MATTER)

by Janet O'Brien, Janet O'Brien Caterers, Sag Harbor

1. Scale and clean a 8-10 lb. fish. (Any larger could be hard to handle.)
2. Cover a large baking sheet with sea salt, and place the fish on the salt.
3. Stuff the cavity with sliced red onions and dill. (Two other wonderful additions are the green tops of a fennel plant and sliced lemons or oranges.)
4. Coat the outside of the skin liberally with more salt. (Do not be shy. The salt is infusing the meat, and it will stay on the outside of the skin.)
5. Roast at 350 degrees for 40 to 45 minutes. The fish should feel firm to the touch.
6. Place on a large platter using two spatulas. Cut down the center of the spine and peel back the skin. Serve off the bone.