

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. 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

GREEN TEA DUCK

by Anthony Schulz, Elements of Nature, Southold

4 de-boned duck breasts	5 c. water
4 green tea packets	2 t. sugar
3 whole cloves	1 t. corn starch
1 bay leaf	1 T. cold water
1 t. peppercorn mélange	salt and pepper for seasoning

1. Bring the 5 c. of water to a boil on the stove. Turn off heat and add tea packets, cloves, bay leaf and peppercorns. Let steep for at least 20 minutes. While that is steeping, trim any excess skin from duck breast, cover and set aside.
2. Next, strain tea mixture into another pot and bring to a boil. Whisk in the sugar and continue to boil. Reduce tea mixture to 1 c. At this point, whisk the corn starch with the 1 T. of cold water to make a slurry and add to tea mixture while continually whisking. Let mixture boil for 2 more minutes after slurry is added. (Mixture will become thicker.) Remove from heat and pour tea glaze into a small bowl.
3. Place large sauté pan on burner at high heat until smoke starts to appear. Season the duck breasts with kosher salt and pepper on both sides. Place breasts in pan, skin side down, and reduce heat to med-high. Turn over to flesh side when skin is a nice golden brown. Once turned, reduce heat to low-medium and spoon tea glaze over skin of breasts, then cover. After 8-10 minutes, check the internal temperature with a cooking thermometer. The temperature should be about 130-135 degrees for a medium-rare doneness.
4. Remove from pan and let rest on cutting board for 5 minutes. Slice the breast into 4-5 slices each and drizzle with some of the remaining tea glaze. Consider serving with jasmine rice and steamed baby carrots.

Costermonger, *n* : One who sells fruit, vegetables, fish, or other goods from a cart, barrow, or stand in the streets.



A SIMPLE BLUEFISH AND VEGGIES

By Jill Musnicki, Sag Harbor

Clean one whole bluefish or striped bass, leaving the head and tail on. Mix 2 big bunches of cilantro, 4 shallots, 1 16-oz. can coconut milk, juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ a lime and $\frac{1}{2}$ t. salt in blender. Pour over fish and bake covered.

For a vegetable side, take string beans, carrots and peppers cut the same size as the beans, leeks sliced cross-ways, and crushed garlic. Sauté on medium heat 5 minutes, add a little water to steam a minute. Add salt and rosemary to taste.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND SHIITAKE MUSHROOM LASAGNA

by Andrea Glick, The Gourmet at Home, Riverhead

1 butternut squash (about 2 lbs.), peeled and diced	1 lb. shiitake mushrooms, tough stems discarded and sliced
$3\frac{1}{2}$ T. olive oil	2 T. minced shallots
1 T. chopped fresh thyme leaves	1 t. minced garlic
salt and freshly ground pepper	2 c. ricotta cheese
freshly ground nutmeg	1 egg
6 T. unsalted butter	1 c. grated Parmesan cheese
5 T. all-purpose flour	9 lasagna sheets (no boil)
$3\frac{1}{2}$ c. cold milk	

1. Preheat your oven to 375 degrees.
2. In a large bowl, combine the squash, 2 T. olive oil and $\frac{1}{2}$ t. thyme. Season with salt, pepper and nutmeg and toss to evenly coat the squash with the oil. Place the squash on a parchment-lined baking sheet and cook in your preheated oven until tender, about 20 to 25 minutes. Set aside.
3. Meanwhile, melt 4 T. of butter in a medium-sized saucepan. Add the flour and cook over medium heat until bubbling, about 2 minutes. Whisking constantly, add the cold milk and cook until it begins to thick-

en, about 5 to 7 minutes. Season with salt, pepper and nutmeg. Set aside.

4. Place the remaining olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the mushrooms and season with salt and pepper. Cook until nicely browned. Add 1 T. of butter, 1 t. of thyme and the garlic and cook another minute. Set aside.

5. Combine the ricotta cheese, the egg, $\frac{1}{2}$ c. of the Parmesan and the remaining $1\frac{1}{2}$ t. of thyme and stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper.

6. To make the lasagna: coat the bottom of a lasagna pan with the remaining T. of butter. Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ c. of the white sauce over the bottom of the pan. Place 3 lasagna sheets, slightly overlapping over the sauce. Spread half of the ricotta cheese mixture over the lasagna sheets. Top with the roasted butternut squash. Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the white sauce over the squash. Continue layering 3 more sheets of lasagna over the squash, the remaining ricotta mixture, then top with the sautéed mushrooms. Spoon $\frac{1}{2}$ c. of the white sauce over the mushrooms. Top with the last 3 lasagna sheets and pour the remaining white sauce over the top, spreading evenly—paying close attention to the outer edges. Sprinkle the remaining Parmesan over the lasagna.

7. Cover the lasagna with foil and bake for 35 minutes. Uncover and cook until nicely browned on the top, about 5 minutes. Remove from the oven and let sit for 15 minutes before serving. Serves 6.