

# Hogtown HomeGrown

Volume 3 Issue 12

December 2008

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## Need to save money? Cook at home!

Jamie Oliver, also known as The Naked Chef, has successfully begun to reform the eating habits of British schoolchildren and their families, primarily by teaching them how to cook. Testifying before a Parliament health committee recently, he said that most people lack the skills to save money by cooking at home. In an age of cheap fast food, stores full of ready-to-eat processed foods, and microwave instant gratification, he may well be right.

But how hard is it to boil water? If you can do that, you can cook an egg, steam veggies or boil pasta—basic skills for a quick, healthy meal at home. Turn the heat down a little to low—now you can poach fish, create soup or simmer sauce for that pasta.

Now let's take away the water—with a hot pan and a little oil you can sear tofu, fry rice or pop corn. Turn down the heat—now you can caramelize an onion, crisp up hash browns or start a frittata.

My point? Cooking at home does not have to come out of a can or box, it does not have to be hard, it does not have to have a long list of pricey ingredients and it doesn't have to take more time to cook dinner than it does to eat it! Cooking can and should be creative, mouth-watering and a source of pride.

I love how my cooking smells from our front walkway—whether it is pungent garlic or fragrant chocolate, it makes coming home a special occasion. Dinner was just about ready to serve last night as I came in from a chilly walk with the dog. The warm, scented air hit me like a low-lying cloud—cumin, oranges, baking cornbread and bubbling beans—combinations of flavors I had created—the wave of pride hit me as hard as the cumin.

So why else do I cook at home—to save money, of course! When the price of one restaurant entrée of pasta could be used to buy groceries to make a meal for 4, that's a no-brainer! Still in doubt? Check out the per portion price of microwave popcorn versus popping your own bulk-bin corn!

Okay, you get the point—cooking at home is cheaper. But it is more than that—it is the ability to control ingredients and flavors, it is the pride of creation and it is the smile on your face when someone says—"That was really good! Can you teach me how to make that?"

## Boiled Eggs—a Primer

### INGREDIENTS

1-2 eggs per person (try local eggs from free-range chickens for a fabulous taste treat)

### DIRECTIONS

Place eggs in a 1 or 2 quart saucepan and cover with cool water. Place on high heat. In 3-5 minutes, the water will begin to bubble—small bubbles are simmer, large bubbles are boil, and violent, churning water is a rolling boil. The water should boil 3 minutes for a soft-boiled egg or 4 minutes for a yolk almost completely cooked through. For a hard-boiled egg that's perfect every time, when the water boils, remove the pan from the heat, cover and let sit for 20 minutes. Whether soft or hard-boiled, immediately rinse eggs in cool water to stop cooking and either use or refrigerate all cooked eggs right away.



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### Haile Village

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Saturdays 830-12pm  
Haile Plantation  
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### Alachua County

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Saturdays 830-1pm  
5920 NW 13th Street  
www.441market.com

## What's Fresh Right Now?

- Beans—green
- Beets
- Bitter Melon
- Bok Choy—baby, regular
- Carrots
- Chestnuts
- Citrus—grapefruit (Duncan, Marsh), tangerines, pineapple oranges, limes, pink lemons, calamondin
- Cucumbers—Kirby, traditional, mini seedless
- Eggplant—purple Italian, long oriental, Thai, fairy tale
- Garlic—chives, elephant
- Greens—chard, spinach, mustard, turnip, collards, rappini, dandelion
- Herbs—basil, mint, parsley, chives, lemongrass, oregano, cilantro, rosemary, cress
- Honey—orange blossom, gallberry, tupelo, orange-blackberry and clover
- Kale
- Kohlrabi
- Lettuce—spring mix, leaf, arugula, frisee, head, spicy mix, escarole
- Onions—yellow, scallions, large green
- Peas—butter, field
- Peanuts—green, boiled
- Pecans—Sumner, Cape Fear, Delicata, Elliot
- Peppers—green/red/orange sweet bell, banana, cubanelle, jalapeno, poblano, hot cherry
- Potatoes—sweet, red new, white
- Radish—globe, icicle, daikon
- Squash—yellow summer, zucchini, kabocha, calabasa, white patty pan, butternut
- Starfruit
- Tomatoes—beefsteak, grape
- Turnips

## Local and Fresh— Chard

Part of the beet family, chard has thick edible stems attached to leafy greens, distinguishing it from familiar beets that put energy into growing large edible roots. Chard gained its “Swiss” title in the 1800’s to differentiate it from French spinaches.

There are several varieties of chard—a rainbow of different colors—but they all cook the same. Most recipes have traditionally used only the leaves, throwing the ribs away, but if the ribs are not woody, they have a great flavor and cook up just fine.

Try chard steamed or sautéed and mixed in with mashed potatoes. Or toss it in a hot pan with olive oil and garlic, just until it wilts, then splash it with a little lemon juice.

## Chard Orange Sauté

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 large bunch of chard
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 orange, zested and sectioned
- 3 green onions, sliced thinly
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger root
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon raw sugar

### DIRECTIONS

Wash chard well in a big bowl of water. Chop ribs of chard into small pieces and slice leaves into strips. Add oil to heated, heavy-bottomed skillet. Stir in chard rib pieces, sauté 3 minutes, then add leaves, stir well to coat with oil. Cook for 3–5 minutes, until uniformly wilted. Mix remaining ingredients together, stir into chard, turn heat to low and simmer 5 minutes. Serve hot or at room temperature. Leftovers do not retain their color, but taste great!

## Black Beans and Accoutrements

### INGREDIENTS

1 pound black beans, cooked in plain water	2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, chopped	3 ribs celery, chopped
1 large carrot, diced	4 large garlic cloves, chopped
2 bay leaves	1 tablespoon each basil, oregano, cumin
1 teaspoon hot pepper flakes or sauce	1/2 cup sherry or water
1 lemon, juiced	1 orange, sectioned

### DIRECTIONS

Cook beans until tender. Heat a heavy-bottomed skillet, add oil and onions, then cook over medium heat until translucent. Stir in carrots, celery and garlic, sauté until carrots and celery have lost their crunch. Add bay leaves, basil, oregano, cumin and hot pepper, stirring to combine. Cook 1-2 minutes, then deglaze the pan with sherry. Scrape entire contents of pan into beans, add lemon juice and orange sections, and stir until combined. Bring to a boil over high heat, reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 30 minutes. Taste for seasoning, add salt and pepper if needed. Serve hot over Brown Rice (September 2007) and pass the Accoutrements and Cornbread!

### ACCOUTREMENTS

lemon and lime wedges	corn kernels
cucumber, chopped	avocado, chopped
boiled egg, chopped	hot sauce
cilantro, chopped finely	sour cream or yogurt
onion, chopped	scallions, chopped
black olives, sliced	tomato, chopped
salsa	guacamole

## Cornbread

### INGREDIENTS

2 1/2 cups finely ground corn meal	2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt	2 teaspoons sugar
1/3 cup canola oil (any plain oil will do)	2 cups buttermilk
2 eggs	Optional add-ins

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Heat 9 inch round cast iron skillet in oven, add oil to hot pan, return pan to oven. Mix dry ingredients in large bowl. In a separate bowl, mix wet ingredients, including hot oil, and add to dry ingredients. Stir well—batter will be slightly lumpy. Stir in any optional add-ins. Pour batter into hot skillet. Bake 30 minutes, until cornbread pulls away from sides of pan and center springs back. Cool 5 minutes, cut and serve.

### **Tricks and Tips**

When our boys were young, a meal of black beans and rice (one of the cheapest ways we could fill them up when money was tight) would elicit groans of “not again” until I started offering little bowls of toppings they could add themselves. We’ve even had Black Beans with Accoutrements for Christmas dinner—it’s cheap, easy and fun!

### **Tricks and Tips**

Want more zip in your cornbread? Try any or all of these add-ins, just be sure to chop finely and mix well!

onion or scallions

corn kernels

green chiles or jalapenos

cheddar or monterey jack cheese

# Hogtown HomeGrown

Local and Seasonal Recipes, Menus and More  
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## Tricks and Tips

Traditional shortbread has lots of butter and most recipes include eggs as well, both of which keep the crumbs together better than oil. If you eat eggs, just add one to the food processor along with the oil. It will whip full of air, add volume to the dough and make the baked shortbread less messy!

# Almond Oatmeal Shortbread

## INGREDIENTS

1 cup almond butter (freshly ground, no salt)  
1/2 cup canola oil, plus a little to prepare pan  
1 cup sugar  
1 cup unbleached flour  
1/4 teaspoon each baking soda and salt  
1/4 teaspoon each almond and vanilla extracts  
1 cup rolled oats  
1 cup whole almonds, chopped medium-fine

## DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Lightly oil an 8 inch square baking dish. Coat bottom of pan with half the chopped almonds.

In a food processor, mix together almond butter, oil and sugar until completely combined and lightly whipped (almost impossible to do by hand, but a mixer would work.) Add extracts, flour, soda and salt, mixing until smooth. Scrape sides of bowl, add oatmeal, and mix until combined.

Press the dough into the pan, carefully covering the nuts, and pressing mixture firmly into the pan. Scatter remaining nuts evenly over the top and press well into the dough.

Bake 25 minutes, until lightly colored. Cool in pan, then cut into 16 squares. The shortbread will be crumbly, but the taste is fantastic and they're vegan!