

# Hogtown HomeGrown

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**Inside this issue:**

**The Art of the Leftover** 1

**What's Fresh Right Now?** 2

**Local and Fresh— Broccoli** 2

**Sautéed Broccoli with Tomatoes** 2

**Tofu-Mushroom- Wine-Cheese Casserole** 3

**Steamed Broccoli Four Ways** 3

**Gingerbread Oatmeal Raisin Cookies** 4

## The Art of the Leftover

I miss turkey sandwiches on the day after a holiday feast. Although it has been at least 10 years since I've eaten turkey, I can taste and describe those sandwiches as if I created one yesterday—soft whole wheat bread, Hellman's mayonnaise, chunks of dark meat (I'm all about the thighs) and maybe, in an inspired moment, whole berry cooked cranberry sauce, just enough to wet the other slice of bread. Lettuce? Maybe. Tomato? Only in a grilled turkey, cheese, bacon and tomato sandwich on sourdough (a favorite during my Denny's waitressing days in Macon, Georgia, but that's another story.)

So what is there to look forward to on the days after the big no-turkey feast at our house, since there are no turkey sandwiches? Well, everything else of course.

I discovered this year that the leftovers of a holiday feast are far superior to the plate full of food consumed after several days of cooking. By the time I sit down on the big day, the food is cold and I'm thinking about serving dessert. This year, I discovered the Art of the Leftover. Depending on my mood, this can either be a succession of feast dishes each served as a separate course to be savored, or a plate packed so tight that the carrots and cranberries stain the mashed potatoes and sweeten the stuffing. Either way, when eaten as a leftover, I can better appreciate the hard work that went into each dish.

We used to measure the growth of our boys by how long the holiday feast lasted as leftovers. When they were younger, a full meal served on Thursday could result in a few scraps still lingering on Sunday. As they grew, as boys will inevitably do, the calendar galloped backwards, until, during the last Thanksgiving holiday when we were all together, the leftovers were completely gone on Friday.

Regular weekday meals don't generate the number of leftovers a feast can, but discovering the Art of the Leftover and planning ahead can help you to enjoy the leftovers as much, if not more than the original meal. My mom called them "planned-overs" - because she worked leftovers into her weekly menus.

The easiest way to create planned-overs is to cook a double amount. If you are making rice, cooking pasta, steaming veggies or creating a casserole, it takes no more time or energy (human or electrical) to make twice as much. Set aside the extras before serving the meal and either refrigerate or freeze them as soon as possible. This saves time on a busy night—a casserole can be popped in the microwave or veggies combined with rice or pasta for a quick, nutritious meal that's faster, better and cheaper than fast food. Extra cooked veggies can also be repurposed to create soups, salads and sauces.

Carlo Petrini, the president of Slow Food, says our refrigerators are tombs for our food, creating garbage with every unused item. Buying food without a plan can result in excess and spoiled food—a waste of time, money and resources. Avoid the death of your food by planning ahead and conserving resources. Practice the Art of the Leftover—by being more mindful, we can save money, time and energy.



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**What's Fresh Right Now?**

- Beans—green, pole
- Bitter Melon
- Bok Choy—pak choy, toy choi
- Broccoli
- Broccoli Raab
- Cabbage—head, chinese
- Carrots
- Chestnuts
- Citrus—juices, satsumas, grapefruit, lemons, oranges
- Cucumbers—mini seedless, slicers, kirby
- Eggplant—large purple italian, green/purple oriental
- Garlic—chives, elephant
- Greens—rappini, summerfest, dandelion, arugula, collards, mustards, turnips, kale, cress
- Herbs—oregano, rosemary, sage, curry leaf, flat leaf parsley, mint
- Honey—orange blossom, gallberry, tupelo
- Kale—red/white russian, dinosaur/black
- Kohlrabi
- Lettuce—salad mix, arugula, bibb, red leaf
- Microgreens—arugula, radish
- Mushrooms—shiitake, oyster
- Onions—green scallions, dry yellow
- Papaya—green
- Pecans—in-shell, shelled
- Peppers—green/red sweet bell, poblano, habanero, banana, jalapeno
- Persimmons—seijo
- Potatoes—red, sweet
- Pumpkins—pie, seminole, calabasa
- Radish—globe, breakfast, daikon,
- Rutabaga
- Shoots—pea, sunflower, corn, spring mix
- Sprouts—alfalfa, clover, quinoa, wheat, sunflower, garbanzo, mung bean, french lentil, green lentil, radish
- Squash—acorn, butternut, pumpkin, calabasa
- Sweet potatoes
- Tomatoes—red beefsteak, grape, green, plum

**Local and Fresh—  
Broccoli**

Just starting to appear at the farmers' markets of North Central Florida, the deep green florets and crispy stems of fresh broccoli are used in many cuisines. From the stir fries of the orient to the veggies platters of suburban America, broccoli is tasty either cooked or raw.

A powerhouse of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, this member of the cruciferous family is related to cauliflower, cabbage and brussel sprouts. When overcooked, it can release a sulphur smell, so just cook until tender.

Look for firm stems and florets that are dark green with no yellowing. Store loosely wrapped in the refrigerator for up to one week.

**Sautéed Broccoli  
with Tomatoes**

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small pepper—hot or sweet—diced
- 2 stalks broccoli, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2-3 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1 teaspoon each dried basil and thyme
- 1 Tablespoon red wine vinegar
- kosher salt to taste

DIRECTIONS

Heat a heavy skillet over high heat, add olive oil and diced pepper. Sauté and stir until edges of the pepper have browned. Add broccoli, stir well and lower heat to medium. Sauté, stirring occasionally, until just tender.

Stir in tomatoes and dried herbs. Cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Uncover and stir in red wine vinegar. Taste for salt. Let simmer 2-3 minutes, then stir well and remove from heat.

Serve hot or cold. Can be served with cooked grains or pasta as a main dish, or by itself as a side. Cover and refrigerate leftovers.

# Tofu-Mushroom-Wine-Cheese Casserole

## INGREDIENTS

- 1-2 Tablespoons olive oil, plus oil to prepare baking dish
- 1/2 medium onion, finely sliced
- 1 pound mushrooms—button, shiitakes, oyster, cremini, or a combination—thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed and chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme or several stems of fresh thyme
- 1 pound extra-firm tofu, cut into 1/2 inch cubes
- 1/3 cup white wine—not cooking wine, just regular, good-tasting wine you would drink
- 1 teaspoon tamari or soy sauce
- 1 Tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 cup green onions, finely chopped
- 4-8 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, cut into thin slices
- 1 Tablespoon sesame seeds

## DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly oil a large rectangular baking dish.

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat and add olive oil. When pan is hot, stir in onions and sauté until translucent. Stir mushrooms into onions, reduce heat and cook until mushrooms are limp and juicy. Add garlic and thyme (if using fresh, strip leaves from stems) and simmer 3-5 minutes. Gently mix in the tofu until completely combined.

Pour into prepared baking dish and distribute evenly. Mix together wine, tamari and Worcestershire. Drizzle liquid over entire casserole. Top with green onions, cover with sliced cheese and sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Bake for 25-30 minutes, until cheese is melted into the wine. Serve hot. Cover and refrigerate leftovers.

# Steamed Broccoli Four Ways

1 large head of broccoli for 2-6 people—cut as desired, steamed over, but not touching, boiling water until cooked as desired. If the stem is woody, remove outer layer and cut into thin strips.

## TOPPINGS

1. Lemon juice, lemon zest, coarsely ground black pepper, and just a pinch of kosher salt
2. Tamari, nutritional yeast, sesame seeds and red pepper flakes
3. Melted butter or olive oil mixed with grated garlic, lemon juice and lemon zest
4. Sliced fresh basil, finely grated parmesan, toasted walnuts, and a drizzle of olive oil

## Serving Suggestions

Serve Tofu-Mushroom-Wine-Cheese Casserole over rice, barley, or couscous.

Bake over a layer of egg noodles or other ribbon-shaped pasta.

Fill a toasted whole-wheat sub roll, top with little more cheese, wrap in foil and bake until hot.

Spoon as a topping on toasted baguette slices, top with cheese, and broil until melted.

## Leftover Recipe

Chop cold steamed broccoli into bite-sized pieces. Add a small amount of raisins and a few chopped walnuts. Mix in a drizzle of bottled coleslaw dressing or other sweet dressing. Stir well and serve cold.

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# Hogtown HomeGrown

Local and Seasonal Recipes, Menus and More

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## Tricks and Tips

Ginger is one of my favorite flavors. I use three different forms—fresh ginger root, crystallized ginger and ground ginger. I generally use fresh ginger in savory dishes and ground ginger in baked goods. Crystallized ginger is sweet and I eat it as is, but also cook with it and put it in jams. When I want a very full ginger flavor, I use all three forms together.

# Gingerbread Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

## INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, melted
- 1 cup light or dark brown sugar, lightly packed
- 1/4 cup molasses
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon each ground cinnamon and nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon each baking soda, baking powder and salt
- 2 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup each raisins and chopped walnuts

## DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly butter an 8 X 8 baking pan.

Mix brown sugar into melted butter. Stir in molasses and spices. Beat in eggs.

Combine flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt. Add to wet ingredients and stir until completely combined. Stir in oats, raisins and walnuts. Press lightly into prepared pan.

Bake 25 - 30 minutes, until firm in the center. Store in an airtight container.