

Hogtown HomeGrown™

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Community Cooking Classes

Over the past couple of years, I have been featured in a few very short cooking segments on WCJB - TV20. These segments are just one part of their continuing news feature “What’s Growing On” which focuses on gardening and farming. Originated by Grow Gainesville, with creative input from Faith Carr, the locally-inspired segments have new energy (and camera angles) with reporter, Alex Calamia.

My little part has grown into a series of cooking classes which began last September. At first we filmed in our home kitchen, but we have gone public and now film once a month in Kitchen Corner at Haile Farmers Market. Community Cooking Classes features a cooking skill paired with local produce in simple recipes. Sometimes I try to fit three recipes into a 2-3 minute segment, but lucky for me, Alex is both a patient cameraman and a creative editor who manages to make it all work.

Here are the cooking skills, produce and recipes we have featured so far:

September	BROIL	Eggplant Pineapple	Layered Eggplant Casserole Broiled Pineapple
October	BLEND	Zucchini Sweet Potatoes	Cream of Green Soup Sweet Potato Custard
November	WHISK	Lettuce Greens	Lemonade Lettuce White Sauce over Sautéed Greens
December	BOIL	Field Peas Spinach	Smoky Field Peas Field Pea Salad
January	STEAM	Carrots Cabbage	Ginger Dumplings with Sauce Carrots with Asian-style topping

Upcoming Community Cooking Class segments will feature BAKE, SAUTE, CHOP, GRIDDLE, GRILL, FIRE and INSTANT POT using local beets, cauliflower, raw salad veggies, blueberries, watermelon, peppers, peanuts and a few surprises along the way.

Tune in to WCJB’s TV20 News 5Live at 5:30pm on January 17th (the third Thursday of the month) or find videos at <https://www.wcjb.com/features/whatsgrowingon>

What's Fresh Right Now?

Bananas

Beans—green, purple, yellow, roma

Bitter Melon

Bok Choy

Broccoli

Cabbage

Cauliflower

Chestnuts

Citrus—satsumas, kumquats, tangerines, orange, grapefruit

Cucumbers—slicers, kirby

Eggplant—fairytale, long

Garlic—chives

Greens—collards, kale, chard, summerfest, mizuna, mustard

Herbs—basil, parsley, dill

Honey—orange blossom, gallberry, wildflower, tupelo

Moringa

Mushrooms—shiitake, oyster, lion's mane, dried shiitake

Onions—green

Papaya

Peppers—red/green/yellow/orange sweet bell, aji, poblano, cayenne, shishito, jalapeño, serrano

Pineapple

Potatoes—red/white, sweet

Radishes—daikon, globe, french breakfast

Shoots and Sprouts

Squash—butternut, spaghetti, kabocha, seminole pumpkin, acorn, yellow crookneck, gold/ green zucchini, pattypan

Strawberries

Tomatoes—cluster, sun gold, juliet

Turnips

Turmeric

Yuca



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Local and Fresh— Carrots

Carrots of all colors are showing up in bunches at our local farmers markets. Don't just eat the roots—carrot greens are completely edible if the carrots are freshly picked. Look for fresh dry greens and unblemished roots for the tastiest raw or cooked dishes.

While carrots were originally purple, Dutch settlers brought seeds for the orange varieties when they moved to the Americas. Farmers now grown everything from solid creamy whites to orange-centered purples. If you can find them, red carrots are especially tasty raw or cooked.

Roasted Carrots with Tangerine Glaze

INGREDIENTS

6 carrots, cut into small chunks
1 teaspoon oil
1/2 cup tangerine juice
1-2 teaspoons tangerine zest (optional)
1 Tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
2 Tablespoons honey
Pinch salt

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees.

Toss carrot chunks with oil until all surfaces are coated.

Place carrots in a roasting pan—high sides on the pan make shaking the carrots easier.

Place carrots in oven and reduce heat to 400. Roast 15-20 minutes, until the largest pieces are easily pierced by a fork.

While the carrots are roasting, combine remaining ingredients in a saucepan large enough to hold the carrots. Stir ingredients, bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer uncovered until glaze is reduced and thickened.

Spoon roasted carrots into saucepan and stir to coat with glaze. Simmer 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Serve carrots hot and drizzle a little glaze over each serving.

Cover and refrigerate leftovers.

Carrot Halvah

INGREDIENTS

1 cup hot water
1/4 cup golden raisins
3 cups shredded carrot
1 1/2 cups whole milk (full fat cow's milk)
1/4 cup maple syrup
1/2 teaspoon cardamom or 4-6 crushed pods
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 cup toasted pecans, finely chopped

DIRECTIONS

In a large heavy pot, soak raisins in hot water for 30 minutes.

Use a slotted spoon to remove raisins from water. Bring water to a boil and stir in shredded carrots.

Add milk, maple syrup and cardamom. Bring to a full simmer, stir well and reduce heat. Cook on low, stirring frequently, for 45 minutes or more, until the liquid is absorbed.

Stir in cinnamon, salt, pecans and soaked raisins.

Serve warm in small dishes or press into shallow pan and refrigerate until completely chilled before cutting into small squares.

VARIATIONS

Instead of cooking carrots in the raisin-soaking water, soften over low heat with ghee, butter, coconut oil or vegan butter.

Try full fat coconut milk or other plant-based milk instead of full fat cow's milk. Low fat milk may be used, if desired.

Instead of maple syrup, try cane syrup, honey or dark sugars, like brown or jaggery, that will melt completely. Date sugar is not suitable because of its texture.

Cardamom, whether ground or in pods, seems to be as important as the carrots, but instead of cinnamon, try saffron.

Instead of golden raisins, try regular raisins, currants, dried cranberries or finely chopped dates, apricots or peaches. Be sure to soak any dried fruit before stirring into cooked carrots.

Almonds or pistachios are the traditional choice and most recipes call for nuts to be either ground to a fine powder, crushed into small pieces or finely chopped. Pecans are the local choice and are best toasted and finely chopped.

Tricks and Tips

It isn't often that carrots get used in recipes for desserts, even though there are plenty of sweet carrot side dishes.

One exception is carrot cake. Unfortunately all the nutrition of the carrot is negated by the immense amounts of sugar, butter and cream cheese called for in most recipes.

Carrot halvah is a simple dessert that can be found in kitchens from India to the Middle East. It is often called a pudding or simply referred to as a sweet. Served warm, it has a pudding-like texture.

Carrot halvah can also be pressed into a pan, chilled and cut into squares.

Not all halvah is made with carrots. You might be familiar with the sesame tahini halvah found in most supermarkets. Available in vanilla, chocolate and marble flavors, it has a firm, crumbly texture.



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Local and Seasonal Recipes, Menus and More

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Have you seen me on TV?

WCJB TV20

What's Growing On? You Grow It, I'll Cook It!

Next segment airs:

Thursday January 17th between 5:30 - 6:00pm

Miss a segment? Watch it online:

<https://www.wcjb.com/features/whatsgrowingon>

Tricks and Tips

Small wheels of camembert are great for quick snacks, meals or desserts. If it will be eaten immediately, look for a wheel that can be dented in the center. If it will be stored in the refrigerator for a while, a firm center will be just fine—the cheese will ripen after purchase. The rind is edible, but I remove it before baking so the cheese and compote can meld together to enhance each other's flavors. Store camembert wheels in the refrigerator. It is easier to cut the rind off a cold cheese. Serve raw camembert at room temperature.

Camembert with Pear Cranberry Compote

INGREDIENTS

- 1 small wheel camembert, chilled (brie may be substituted)
- 1 firm pear or apple
- 2 cups raw cranberries
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 2 Tablespoons pear or apple juice
- 2 Tablespoons maple or cane syrup
- 2 Tablespoons raw sugar (optional)
- Pinch salt

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Cut rind off of cheese. Place cheese in an oven-proof baking dish. Set aside to come to room temperature.
- Peel, core and dice pear into pieces the size of the cranberries.
- In a heavy saucepan over medium heat, combine pear, cranberries, juice and maple syrup. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- When all berries have popped and pear is tender, taste and add sugar if necessary.
- Simmer additional 10 minutes. Remove from heat and let compote cool slightly.
- Spoon half the compote onto camembert and press to create a compact mound on top.
- Bake 30 minutes.
- Remove from oven and let cool 15 minutes before serving.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

- Chunks of fresh baguette or thin slices of toasted baguette.
- Thinly sliced pears and apples.