

Hogtown HomeGrown

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Anniversaries—a time to celebrate

I love to mark the passage of time with anniversary celebrations. In October, my husband Jeff and I celebrated 30 years of marriage. Part of our gift to each other was five days at Centennial House, a bed and breakfast in St. Augustine. It was blissful—lazy days of reading, eating, walking and sleeping. But on our actual anniversary, I wanted to do something significant for such a special occasion.

For years, when asked what he wanted for dinner, Jeff would answer as a joke “crab-stuffed lobster.” He never got it, partly because of my fear of the “lobster moment” when you kill them and they jump or scream. Well, I talked to Lee at Northwest Seafood and he assured me that they would do the hard part, if I could handle the stuffing and cooking. I left the store with two Maine lobsters and a pound of crabmeat. My lobster moment was yet to come...

As I trimmed the extra bits with a pair of scissors, the lobster jumped across the counter and I jumped about a foot off the floor, uttering something extremely unprintable. It was just muscle movement, but it was my “lobster moment”. Everything else went smoothly—the stuffing was simple and the lobster was easy to bake. We ate on the porch, admiring the sunset, the lobsters and the Italian Pinot Grigio from Dorn’s. It was a fabulous anniversary!

November marks another anniversary—Hogtown HomeGrown is three years old! The newsletter that began as a labor of love to promote local foods and farmers markets, has grown to 2000 hard copies distributed monthly around North Central Florida and a website that gets worldwide hits.

To celebrate, I have a present for you—a blog. Kitchen Crumbs will be another place for me to talk about food. You can find Kitchen Crumbs at <http://hogtownhomegrown.blogspot.com>—don’t forget to sign up as a follower. (Thanks to Leah Sherer of Celebrations Catering and her blog Catering Crumbs for inspiring the name.)

Crab-Stuffed Lobster for Two

INGREDIENTS

1 Tablespoon olive oil	1 shallot, diced
1 lemon, zested and juiced	5-6 sprigs thyme or 1/4 cup parsley
8 ounces crab meat	2 lobsters, 1 1/2 pounds each, cleaned

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Heat oil in small skillet, add shallot and sauté until tender. Remove from heat. Mix together shallot, lemon zest, juice, thyme leaves and crab meat. Spoon crab mixture into lobster cavity and compress with back of spoon to eliminate any air pockets. Place stuffed lobsters in large baking pan. Bake for 25 minutes. Cool for 5 minutes and serve immediately. Note: May be served with melted butter for dipping lobster meat.



Tioga

Monday Market

Mondays 4-7pm
Tioga Town Center
West Newberry Road



Union Street

Farmers Market

Wednesdays 4-7pm
Community Plaza
Downtown Gainesville



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farmersmarket.highsprings.com



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www.441market.com

What's Fresh Right Now?

- Arugula
- Beans—long, wing
- Bitter melon
- Bok Choy—baby, regular
- Chestnuts
- Cucumbers—mini seedless, kirby
- Eggplant—purple italian, mini italian, thai, oriental
- Garlic—chives, elephant
- Greens—rappini, endive, collards, kale, dandelion, mustard
- Herbs—italian/thai basil, cilantro, parsley, lemongrass, oregano
- Honey—gallberry, orange blossom, tupelo
- Lettuce—boston bibb, green leaf, red tip green leaf, spring mix
- Malabar spinach (asian spinach)
- Mushrooms—shitake
- Onions—yellow, green
- Papaya—green, ripe
- Peanuts—green, boiled
- Peas—white acre
- Peppers—green/red sweet bell, cubanelle, jalapeno, habanero
- Pineapple
- Potatoes—white, red, sweet
- Prickly Pear Cactus Fruit
- Radish—red, white
- Roselles
- Sprouts—alfalfa, mung bean, garbanzo, lentil, wheat, pea
- Squash—summer, zucchini, butternut, calabasa, hubbard, pumpkin
- Star Fruit
- Sweet Potatoes
- Tomatoes—beefsteak, grape, cherry
- Turnips

It's all for sale at the farmers markets!
Buy everything you need—grass-fed beef, seafood, tempeh, milk, yogurt, cheese, and lots of preserved foods and baked goods—all from local farmers and vendors.

Local and Fresh—

Arugula

Spicy and peppery, arugula is a versatile aromatic green that is great raw but also makes a tasty cooked vegetable. If you're making a salad and want to tone down the intense flavor, combine arugula with other salad greens. Making cooked greens, but can't find arugula? Substitute escarole or dandelion greens.

Arugula, a staple in Italian kitchens for centuries, has become more popular in the United States since the early 1990s. Originally known as rocket, arugula became infamous during the early part of the Obama campaign—just Google it and you can see for yourself!

Sweet n' Spicy Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large sweet potato, peeled
- 4 handfuls of arugula, washed well
- 2 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup nuts, toasted (walnuts are my choice)
- 1/4 cup goat cheese crumbles
- freshly ground salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS

Cut peeled sweet potato into 1/2 inch cubes. Boil or steam until just tender, rinse in an ice water bath and set aside. (It works best if you do this step ahead of time and refrigerate the potatoes until well-chilled.)

Toss arugula with oil and vinegar and place dressed arugula on serving platter or individual plates.

Top with sweet potato, nuts and crumbled cheese. Season lightly with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.

NOTE: You can substitute a good-quality bottled balsamic vinaigrette for the oil and vinegar. Taste before seasoning assembled salad.

Save the World—One Entrée at a Time!

Scallops with Sweet and Savory Tomatoes

INGREDIENTS

1 Tablespoon olive oil	2 cloves elephant garlic, minced
8 medium plum tomatoes, halved and seeded	1 large shallot, sliced thinly
1 dash each salt and pepper	1/2 teaspoon raw sugar
2 teaspoons red wine vinegar	1 Tablespoon olive oil
12 large sea scallops, rinsed and patted dry	4 cups arugula (small leaves or torn into pieces)
1-2 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar	4-6 sprigs of thyme

DIRECTIONS

Heat heavy skillet over medium heat and add olive oil. Stir in minced garlic and sauté until it just starts to color, then add tomatoes and shallot, stirring well to coat with oil. Turn heat to low and cook for as long as possible, up to 4 hours, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. (Depending on your stove, a burner cover that reduces the heat even further might be useful for this recipe.) Half an hour before serving, season with salt, pepper, sugar and red wine vinegar, stir well and continue to cook until ready to serve.

In a separate pan, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. When oil shimmers and just starts to smoke, turn heat to medium and carefully add scallops one at a time, in a pattern you can remember, so that you can turn them over in the same order. After the first scallop has cooked two minutes on one side, turn all scallops over, cook one minute and remove pan from heat.

Toss arugula with balsamic vinegar and thyme leaves stripped from stems. Mound arugula on individual plates. Top each with 6 scallops and cooked tomatoes. Serve immediately.

Tricks and Tips

The slow cooking allows the tomatoes to lightly caramelize and get a very deep, sweet flavor, which is enhanced by both the sugar and vinegar. Be sure to seed the tomatoes well, since any extra liquid will make them stew in their own juices instead of caramelizing.

Double-Stuffed Eggplant

INGREDIENTS

2 Tablespoons olive oil	1 medium eggplant
1 small eggplant	1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
1/2 cup diced onion	2 cloves elephant garlic, chopped
8 ounces extra firm tofu, cubed	1/2 cup walnuts, chopped
2 Tablespoons tamari	2 Tablespoons fresh herbs (thyme is great)
salt and pepper	1 teaspoon dried herbs (thyme or marjoram)

DIRECTIONS

Cut medium eggplant in half lengthwise, then carefully remove eggplant meat, leaving a 1/4 inch shell. Peel small eggplant and chop all eggplant into small pieces.

Heat olive oil over medium heat in large skillet. Combine eggplant and all veggies with tofu in skillet and sauté until soft. Mix in walnuts, tamari and fresh herbs.

Sprinkle eggplant halves with salt, pepper and dried herbs, then stuff with eggplant mixture. Place in casserole with 1/2 inch of water, cover and bake 30-45 minutes until a knife can pierce the eggplant's skin. Serve immediately.

Tricks or Tips

If you like eggplant, you will love this vegan version of traditional stuffed eggplant. Eliminating the bread crumbs and eggs does create a looser stuffing, so be sure to firmly pack it into the eggplant shells. If you want cheese melted over the top, I recommend something mild like Farmer's Cheese or something nutty like Jarlsberg.



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Hogtown HomeGrown

Local and Seasonal Recipes, Menus and More
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Tricks and Tips

I make bread pudding out of all kinds of fruit and spice combinations, depending on the season. The pumpkin in this recipe melts into the liquid ingredients providing a subtle flavor and texture, but, more importantly, lots of nutrition. Do not use fresh pumpkin unless it is a very thick puree, because the extra liquid could affect the finished texture and flavor.

Autumn Bread Pudding

INGREDIENTS

1 small loaf artisan white bread, sliced	1 can (15 ounces) pumpkin puree
1/3 cup honey	3 eggs
4 cups milk	1/4 cup chopped crystallized ginger
1/2 cup dried cranberries	1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger	1/4 teaspoon salt
3 ripe pears, cut into 1 inch chunks	1 teaspoon butter

DIRECTIONS

Cut sliced bread into quarters, place in a large bowl and allow to sit in open air to dry slightly while assembling remaining ingredients.

Beat together pumpkin and honey. Whisk in eggs until completely incorporated, then add milk and mix until smooth. Add chopped ginger, cranberries, cinnamon, ginger and salt. Mix well to combine. Pour over bread and stir to coat bread completely. Gently stir in pears. Cover and refrigerate overnight, if possible. You can bake it immediately, but the bread crust softens more if it soaks overnight.

When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a large, shallow baking dish—3 quarts works best. Stir mixture gently but thoroughly, then pour into prepared baking dish. Use a spoon to even out surface and press lightly to compact. Cover with foil and bake 45 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 15 minutes.

Serve warm or cover and refrigerate. Leftovers may be wrapped in foil and frozen in individual servings if desired. Delicious as a dessert, but it makes a yummy breakfast too!