



EATING WITH THE SEASONS

Basically, eating “seasonally” means including foods in your diet that are grown at the same time of the year you eat them. Why should we do this?

BENEFITS OF EATING SEASONALLY:

1. Produce picked at its peak generally has more vitamins, minerals and antioxidants than foods harvested before they are ripe and shipped long distances.
2. In-season produce tastes better.
3. You automatically get a wider variety of fruits and veggies in your diet, broadening your palate and exposing you to items you may not have otherwise tried. Berries and yummy stone fruit in the late spring and summer and then apples, pumpkins and winter squash in the fall and winter.
4. It can be good for the environment by supporting local and small/midsize farmers while cutting down on the pollution from shipping and trucking food, thereby reducing your carbon footprint.
5. It can save you money because you are buying food that is at the peak of its supply, it costs less to farmers and distributors to harvest and get to your grocery store.
6. It connects us to the calendar by eating things harvested at their peak.

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO START EATING SEASONALLY:

- **Head to the farmer’s market** – Stock up on fresh veggies, fruits, breads, condiments, teas, eggs, meats, fish, dairy and other goodies by heading to a weekly farmer’s market. There is likely one close to you in your area. Check out www.localharvest.org and www.arizonafarmersmarkets.com to get more information on when, where and what is in your neighborhood.
- **Buy a share in a local farm through a CSA** – Short for “community supported agriculture”, you pay a local farm in advance for a season or certain number of weeks and get a weekly delivery or pick-up of fresh veggies and fruits. You get whatever they planted during the growing season. Basically, you take home whatever the farmer brings. Many have options to add in fresh eggs, chickens, dairy, breads and even coffee.
- **Use the internet to find out what’s in season** – Use websites like www.eatwellguide.org to find farmer’s markets, restaurants and other businesses in the areas utilizing local harvests and <http://www.sustainabletable.org/seasonalfoodguide/> to find out what’s in season in your area.
- **Go pick your own** - Find out what’s in season, what events are going on in your area and if there are local “you pick” farms at <http://www.pickyourown.org/AZharvestcalendar.htm>. Think peaches at Schnepf Farms!!! Apples in Wilcox!
- **Start a garden or join a community garden** – You don’t need a ton of space or a killer green thumb to pull off a garden. Tomatoes, cucumbers and herbs are easy to grow. You can start with seedlings or seeds. If you don’t have space for an actual garden in ground, you can easily use large pots, window boxes, or raised beds. Here’s a great resource of what and when to plant in Maricopa County: <http://extension.arizona.edu/sites/extension.arizona.edu/files/pubs/az1005.pdf>. If you can’t do that, think about joining a community garden. You can find community gardens in your area at this website as a starter: <https://communitygarden.org/find-a-garden/>.



- **Read the signs at the grocery store** – Many grocery stores in town offer locally harvested produce in their produce department. Just check the signage to see what’s locally grown. This produce is not always, but frequently, located in the organic section of the grocery store. Basha’s and Whole Foods highlight local produce all year.
- **Check the sales advertisements for produce before you shop** – This is no guarantee that what you are getting is local, but it’s usually a good indicator of what is fresh and in-season. If a food is out of season, it has to be shipped from around the world to get to you, usually picked before the peak of their flavor in order to survive the long trip (or to mature during the travel) to your grocery store. They are much more expensive because of the time, distance and number of people involved with getting those items to you. Taste is another factor. There’s a big difference between berries that you buy and eat in season (and coincidentally, on sale) in the late spring and summer and the berries you pay top dollar for in the off-season. Think of all the other veggies that are usually on sale and super cheap when they are in season and abundant: peaches, citrus, corn, summer squashes are just a few that come to mind.
- **Look at the produce** – We already mentioned price and even the trends on price towards the end of a growing season. Things do start to get more expensive towards the end of the season. But, another clue to end of season is how the produce looks. Have you ever noticed that what is available just doesn’t look as good as the ones during the peak? Just think of berries as an example.
- **Don’t forget about frozen** – Produce that’s in the frozen sections is typically picked and frozen at its peak, which makes it high in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. It is often less expensive than out-of-season produce shipped to your local supermarket from South American, Asia or Australia.
- **Do your own version of seasonal eating** – Look, if you *love* certain fruits and veggies and you can get them year round, enjoy them. If your doctor suggests eating more leafy greens and kale and spinach are out of season (hello summer in AZ), don’t turn them down just to say “I am eating seasonally”. Just be mindful that you’ll spend more in the process and there may be a seasonal or local alternative that’s just as good, and good for you.
- **Plan your meals** – Strategic planning on when you are hitting the farmer’s market, picking up your CSA or reviewing the produce flyers can help you to be successful. In addition, think about meal planning after you see what goodies are at the farmer’s market or in your basket. Create your grocery list around the seasonal items instead of the other way around.
- **If you are interested in going local** – Eating seasonally does not mean that you have to eat local. But if you are interested in building more ties and relationships to your community, eating locally can do that. In addition, eating locally keeps money in the community. There are plenty of local bakeries, coffee shops, breweries, dairies, salsa makers, etc. in your community. To find more local businesses in relation to agriculture and food, visit <http://www.localfirstaz.com/directory/index.php> and click on “Local Agriculture and Food Production”. Or, you can even click on the broader category of “Eat and Drink” to find restaurants, cafes, grocery/beverage stores in addition to farms, dairies, individual producers.



Carrot Salad with Nut Butter Ginger Dressing

Servings: 6

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients

- ¼ cup nut butter of your choice (natural, of course with no added sugars or oils)
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 tablespoon low sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon ginger root, grated
- 2 scallions, whites coarsely chopped and greens sliced thin
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 pound carrots, peeled into long thin strips or spiralized
- 1 cup packed fresh cilantro, chopped

Directions

In a blender, combine nut butter, lime juice, soy sauce, honey, ginger, scallion whites, garlic and 2 tablespoons water. Blend until smooth.

Toss carrots with half of dressing.

Add more dressing 1 tablespoon at a time if desired.

Cover and refrigerate any leftover dressing for another use.

Gently toss in cilantro and scallion greens before serving.

Description

114 kcal; 6 g fat, 4 g fiber, 3 g pro, 14 g carb, 166 mg sodium



Baked Parmesan Zucchini

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients

4 zucchini, quartered lengthwise
½ cup grated parmesan
½ teaspoon dried thyme
½ teaspoon dried oregano
½ teaspoon dried basil
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Coat a cooling rack with nonstick spray and place on a baking sheet; set aside.

In a small bowl, combine Parmesan, thyme, oregano, basil, garlic powder, salt and pepper, to taste.

Place zucchini onto prepared baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with Parmesan mixture. Place into oven and bake until tender, about 15 minutes. Then, broil for 2-3 minutes or until crisp and golden brown.

Serve immediately, garnished with parsley, if desired.

Description

187 kcal; 11 g fat, 11 g fiber, 7 g pro, 20 g carb, 188 mg sodium

Herb and Lemon Roasted Beets

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 4 servings, about 2/3 cup each

Ingredients

- 1 ½ pounds golden, red, or chiongia beets, peeled, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces or wedges
- 3 - 4 teaspoons olive oil or canola oil
- 1 - 2 teaspoons Herbs de Provence
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice



Directions

Position rack in lower third of oven; preheat to 450°F.

Combine oil, herbs, lemon zest, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Add beets; toss to coat with the seasoning mixture.

Spread the beets evenly on a rimmed baking sheet.

Roast, stirring once or twice, until the beets are tender and browned, 20 to 25 minutes.

Squeeze fresh lemon juice over the roasted vegetables. Toss and serve.

Description

115 kcal; 5 g fat, 4 g fiber, 3 g pro, 17 g carb, 421 mg sodium

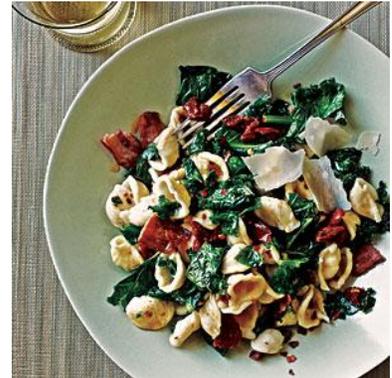
Pasta with Greens, Bacon, and Sun-Dried Tomatoes

Servings: 4

Yield: 4 servings (serving size: about 1 1/4 cups)

Ingredients

8 ounces uncooked chunky pasta (Penne, shells, rigatoni, orecchiette, etc.)
5 cups prewashed greens (kale, spinach, Swiss chard, dandelion, etc.)
2 slices center-cut bacon
¼ cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained and roughly chopped
½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
3 large garlic cloves, chopped
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon salt
4 ounces Chevre, crumbled
1 ounce Parmesan, coarsely grated
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice



Directions

1. Cook pasta in boiling water until almost tender per directions on the box. Add greens and cook 2 minutes. Drain in a colander over a bowl, reserving ½ cup cooking liquid.
2. While pasta cooks, cook bacon in a large skillet over medium-high heat 4 minutes or until crisp. Remove bacon from pan with a slotted spoon; crumble and set aside.
3. Reduce heat to medium-low. Add sun-dried tomatoes, crushed red pepper, and garlic to drippings in pan; cook 1 minute, stirring frequently. Add pasta mixture, reserved cooking liquid, goat cheese, black pepper, and salt to pan; toss to melt cheese and combine.
4. Top pasta mixture evenly with bacon and cheese; drizzle evenly with lemon juice.

Description

309 kcal; 10 g fat, 6 g fiber, 17 g pro, 46 g carb, 386 mg sodium



Wilted Kale with Farro and Walnuts

Servings: 4

Yield: Serves 4 (serving size: 3/4 cup)

Ingredients

- 1 cup pearled farro (Bob's Red Mill, Trader Joe's, Whole Foods)
- 4 teaspoons walnut oil, divided
- 3 ½ cups kale, stemmed and chopped (lacinto works best, but any will work)
- 1/3 cup unsalted chicken stock
- 4 teaspoons sherry vinegar
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons toasted, chopped walnuts



Directions

1. Prepare farro per directions on box/bag.
2. Heat a Dutch oven over medium-low heat. Add 2 teaspoons walnut oil and chopped kale; cook 2 minutes.
3. Add chicken stock; cover and cook 4 minutes.
4. Combine vinegar and maple syrup in a bowl. Add farro, 2 teaspoons walnut oil, and kosher salt. Stir to combine.
5. Add kale mixture and walnuts. Stir and serve.

Description

281 kcal; 8 g fat, 8 g fiber, 13 g pro, 45 g carb, 245 mg sodium