



24 JUNE 2010
12 Tamutz 5770

Parashat Balak
Numbers 22:2 - 25:9

Haftara, Micah 5:6 - 6:8

Sunset 6.25.2010 - 8:53PM

Searching for soul food

by Ilana Mantell

Almost four thousand years ago, two people set off on a journey. They did not know where it would lead. All they knew was that they heard a voice:

*Leave your land, your birthplace and your father's house
And go to the land I will show you. (Genesis 12:2)*

Those words were enough to set Abraham and Sarah off on a journey that would eventually change the world.

Where were they going, and what was it they were about to do? The couple's life had no significant public dramas. They were not heroic figures of the kind we find in Greek legends. Abraham was not a king or a warrior. For the most part, he and Sarah lived quietly, far from power and fame. What was special about them was that they had the courage to be different.

I think this gets to a key element

Sesame Roasted Snap Peas

- 1 pound sugar snap peas, trimmed
 - 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
 - 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
 - 1/2 teaspoon black sesame seeds
1. Preheat oven to 475° F
 2. Toss snap peas, sesame oil, and salt in a bowl. Spread in a single layer on a baking sheet.
 3. Place in the oven and roast, turning halfway through, until snap peas are tender and lightly browned, about 10-15 minutes.
 4. Toss with sesame seeds and serve.



This week's Harvest:

- 2 bunches Oxbow Carrots
- 1.5 lbs Sugar Snap Peas
- 1 bunch Green Garlic
- 1 bunch Chiogga Beet Greens w/ lil' babies
- 1 bunch Rainbow Chard
- 1 head Jericho Romaine
- 1 head Cherokee Red Lettuce
- 1 head Red or Green Butterhead
- 1 head Baby Butterhead

EAT well.
DO good.

Our tree-free 2.0 Newsletter

by Steven Neuman

We're on our second week of the newsletter and chances are you've noticed something this week — we've gone digital.

You might be wondering, "Where's my paper copy?" right about now, but after some feedback last we decided to make the leap. Kavana is a profoundly wired community and putting the newsletter online lets us

conserve more resources while providing a richer experience. There will still be black and white printouts at pick-up locations, but the goal is to reduce our footprint, so we'll print a limited number and go from there.

Share the links, print your own copy or pass the file along, and let us know what you think for next week.



THE COOKING BRACHA: A BLESSING FOR MAKING FOOD

From Hazon, the organization that helps sponsor our CSA. Adapted from Leah Koenig & Anna Stevenson

Jewish tradition loves to bless food (or rather to bless G-d for food). We bless bread, we bless wine- we bless snacks as well as meals. We have different blessings for fruit grown on trees vs. fruit grown in the ground and, remarkably, when we're done eating and feeling satisfied, we bless again! But for some reason, despite all these food blessings, there is no Jewish blessing for cooking.

MOROCCAN BEET GREEN SALAD

- 2 bunches beet greens
- 2-4 cloves garlic
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon sweet paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- Salt and black pepper
- Juice of one lemon

1. Slice well-washed beets horizontally, about 1/4 inch wide, and put into a deep pot. Add a spoon or two of water if they seem dry. Cover and steam on medium low heat for 10-15 minutes or until soft. Let cool.
2. Put the greens in a wire colander over a bowl and press out as much liquid as possible.
3. Finely chop 2 to 4 cloves of garlic and put in a large frying pan with extra virgin olive oil. Saute at medium high until garlic begins to brown. Add greens, stir and cook a few minutes.
4. Add paprika, cumin, oregano, salt, and black pepper. Stir and cook a few more minutes, adding a bit of reserved liquid or olive oil if it seems dry.
5. Remove from heat, squeeze in the juice of one lemon (can be partly bottled juice), and taste for salt and lemon. Serve at room temperature.

— Adapted from Joan Nathan

of being Jewish – having the courage to think independently of the dominant culture, to envision a world based on a different set of values, and to have the quiet perseverance to live our lives in way that is consistent with those values.



A commitment to local, sustainable food is not easy – it's often more expensive than conventional produce, and it means that your diner might be limited to what's in season at any given time. But when we open our eyes to the reality of America's industrial food systems, and to the true costs of global climate change, we hear a voice telling us that something has to be done differently. To me, this CSA is a wonderful example of having the courage to be different – to envision a different type of community, with a different way of thinking about where our food comes from, based on a different set of values. We've all set out on a journey, and much like Abraham and Sarah, we don't know where it will lead us. But I'm excited to think about the possibilities, and to share the adventure with all of you.

The act of standing in a kitchen ~ coaxing raw ingredients from your CSA share, into a nourishing meal through heat, patience, and wisdom, seems pretty holy. The mere fact that the ingredients are there to cook is, in itself, no small miracle! So, a couple of years ago, in conjunction with Hazon's Beit Midrash on (what else?!) Jews, food, and contemporary life, we wrote a cooking bracha (blessing). It's a blessing to be said just before turning the stove on under a pot of water, before dipping one's hands into the flour, before the flurry of activity that, G-d willing, will create a delicious meal worthy of its own blessing.

*Blessed are You, Creator of the world
Who brings forth fruit from the Earth.*

*Blessed are You, Who gives us knowledge
of cooking, and time to cook and who has
blessed us with the need for nourishment so
that we can fully understand Your gifts.*

*May it be Your will that the food that I cook
bring nourishment, fulfillment, and happiness to
those who eat it and bring honor to the land and
all the people that make this meal possible.*

— by Leah Koenig & Anna Stevenson