



Alfalfa
House

NEWS

AUGUST 2009

THIS MONTH ▶Pastas **3-5** ▶Wild greens **6** ▶New faces **7** ▶Bay leaves+Calendula **8**

Film night almost too successful!



Our film night on Thursday July 16 was almost too successful – if such a thing is possible.

Although a wet, cold night, the Red Rattler in Marrickville was warm and toasty with good cheer, soup, cakes and chocolate, organic beer and wine and of course the movie. Well, there was soup for some; we undercatered big time. More than a hundred braved the night, but we'd only made enough soup

for 60 – a useful pointer for next time.

The film, *The Real Dirt on Farmer John*, was an honest, fascinating insight into the journey, both painful and joyous, of farmer John Peterson from the collapse of his family farm to its rebirth and growth to become one of America's biggest organic Community Supported Agriculture farms. Well worth looking out for, if you missed out.

The night raised more than \$1200,

which will help us renovate the outside of the shop and the get that mural on the side we've been talking about for years.

Nassim Arrage, who coordinated the night, is keen to do more such nights. If you'd like to help him and gain expert events management skills and extra discounts, email info@alfalfahouse.org. He's suggesting another night in a few months, so watch this space. – *Stevie Bee*

F+V

what's good in fruit+veg with Jamie Payne

TRY THE HERITAGE APPLES

If you haven't tried the heritage apples, you best be quick – the farm in Blayney is running low and they're only in each Sunday fortnight. We also have more and more local produce, including mandarins, tangellos and oranges.

NEW ARRIVALS

▶**SWEDES**: Slightly sweet root vegetable, use in mash or as a base for curries, soups.
▶**TURNIPS**: Similar to radish only sweeter with a milder flavour. Very high in vit. C. Great for pickling, salads and soups.
▶**YAKON**: Sweet and juicy. Eat it raw, lightly steamed, add to porridge or dry it out and eat just like dried fruit.
▶**TANGELLO**: A larger variety of citrus that is similar to the tangerine. Sweet and juicy, it's a delightful addition to freshly squeezed juice.

▶**ASIAN GREENS/ROOT VEGES**: Mizuna, horseradish, daikon, nozawana, pak choy. Freshly-harvested and locally-grown.
▶**RADISH**: A slightly pungent and peppery root vegetable, used raw in salads or added to stirfrys and soups.
▶**GALANGAL**: Resembles ginger but harder and sweeter with citrus and earthy flavours. Adds a Thai flavour and aroma to soups.
▶**FRESH TURMERIC**: Has an earthy and peppery flavour with a hint of bitterness. Pickle in salt and lemon juice to eat with curries or add fresh to soups and stirfrys.

ON THEIR WAY OUT

▶**CAPSICUM**: Late season red and green
▶**ONIONS**: They're sprouting as they do as spring nears. Add green shoots to stirfrys. Spanish onions are in sporadic supply.
▶**YELLOW SQUASH**: Less available now

and a little pricier. Try Table Queen Squash – ideal for stuffing and baking.

WHAT'S GOOD NOW

▶**APPLES**: Golden Del, Fuji, Pink Lady, Grannys, Red Del, Jonathan and Gala.
▶**CABBAGE**: Red and green
▶**CHOKO**: Very creamy, savoury or sweet.
▶**CITRUS**: Lemons, limes, grapefruit, tangellos, pomelos and mandarins.
▶**JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE**: Ideal baked, in stews and soups.
▶**KOHLRABI**: Try it shredded, soaked in tamari and lime and added to a salad.
▶**PEARS**: Victorian, Biodynamic Packham and Buerre Bosc.
▶**PUMPKIN**: Butternut and Jap
▶**ROOT VEGES**: Potatoes, turnips, parsnips, radish, kumera, swedes, yakon. Perfect in soups and stews.

Jamie

■ If you'd like to ask me about anything, or to order in bulk, please email produce@alfalfahouse.org

■ For week-to-week fruit+veg availability: go to www.alfalfahouse.org/html/PRODUCTS/fruit+veg.htm ■ FD: Farmer-Direct

WHAT'S *new* IN GROCERIES

WITH MONIKA BAUMANN

WHAT'S *new*

►Organic **COCONUT SUGAR**, which is produced from coconut palm sugar blossoms, is a delicious, mineral-rich, low GI (35) alternative to cane sugar. It's certified organic, minimally-processed unfiltered, unbleached and preservative-free. It has a rich toffee-like flavour.

Coconut sugar can be used 1:1 as a replacement for brown sugar in any recipe. It is suitable for baking, and makes a great replacement for cane sugar in tea and coffee. Coconut sugar is a rich source of potassium, magnesium, zinc and iron and is a source of vitamins B1, B2, B3 and B6. When compared to brown sugar, coconut sugar has twice the iron, four times the magnesium and over 10 times the amount of zinc.

All proceeds from the sale of the first ten kilos goes towards more gravity bins!

►Organic **ROLLED BARLEY** replaces the organic rolled rye, which is no longer available.

►True Organic **BRIE** replaces the Barambah Brie, which is no longer available.

►True Organic **BUTTER** from Australia replaces the Tatura butter we have been stocking.

►Organic **CHILLI FLAKES**, an

GRAVITY BIN CHOCOLATES

Alter Eco Milk Hazelnut
Alter Eco 73% Dark Cacao
with nibs

ONLY \$5 EA

ORGANIC+FAIR TRADE
NO OTHER DISCOUNTS APPLY
WHILE STOCKS LAST

100% of sales go to buy more gravity-feed bins

excellent warming addition to any winter dish.

►Organic **GREEN LENTILS** are now sourced from Australia while that supply lasts.

►Biodynamic **MEDIUM BROWN RICE** from NSW is currently available but in very limited supply. There's a strict limit of one kilo per membership per day and, unfortunately, no bulk orders.

►Organic **WHOLEMEAL SPAGHETTI** from Australia – see pages 3–5

►**TOASTED MAPLE SYRUP SPELT MUESLI** (oats, almonds, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, sultanas, coconut, sunflower oil, maple, spices) from Sonoma.

All proceeds from the sale of the first ten kilos goes towards more gravity bins.

►**ALFALFA HOUSE T-SHIRTS** A bargain at \$5 each, no further discount. Limited supply.

All proceeds go towards gravity bins.

WHAT'S *back*

►Farmer-direct **KALAMATA OLIVES** from the Hunter Valley make a welcome return – look for the big bucket in the bottom of the fridge.

►**TOOTHBRUSHES** and **TOOTHBRUSH HEADS** are back.

►New season organic **CRANBERRIES** sweetened with organic apple juice have now arrived.

PRICEWATCH

Product	Alfalfa House* Cert. Organic	Health Food Store Cert. Organic	Supermarket Cert. Organic	Supermarket Not Organic
Baked beans, 100g	\$1.11	\$0.73	NA	\$0.43
Linguini, 100g	\$1.57	\$2.28	NA	\$0.71
Balsamic vinegar, 100g	\$2.45	\$3.39	NA	\$1.20
Dates, 100g	\$2.70	\$2.60	NA	\$0.86
Mandarins, 100ml	\$0.55	\$0.80	NA	\$0.30

SURVEY NUMBER 11, AUGUST 2009 ■ NA: not available

*PRICES ARE WITH THE BASIC 10% MEMBER DISCOUNT.

– Compiled by Jo Rose

POSITIONS VACANT:

Two spots on the MC

There are two vacancies on the co-op's Management Committee (MC). If you'd like to help shape the direction of Alfalfa House, why not join? To find out more, including Directors' Duties and the minutes of the meetings, go to www.alfalfahouse.org/html/who_are_we.htm. If you'd like to chat to an MC member about it, email coordinator@alfalfahouse.org.

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SPEND \$40 IN AUGUST AND SAMPLE THE SWEET DELIGHTS OF YAKON

Don't forget to pick up your free Alfalfa House calendar next time you're shopping or print your own from the website's NEWS page. Each calendar features a number of coupons that you can redeem for free samples and gifts.

During August, spend \$40 and receive \$4 worth of yakon.

PRINT YOUR OWN CALENDAR. GO TO www.alfalfahouse.org/assets/downloads/ah_calendar09.pdf

Pastas



While simple enough as a concept – that is, little more than flour and water – pasta is sufficiently versatile to be the centrepiece of a three-course dinner or something you whip up into a quick filling meal in under twenty minutes at the end of a long hard day. And there are plenty of varieties.

The term 'pasta' is a generic descriptor of a wide range of foods from around the world that are made from a mixture of flour – typically wheat – and water that can be formed into any number of different shapes, from huge pasta shells that are served stuffed to tiny pasta shapes used in soups to the long-shaped spaghetti or shorter macaroni. Pasta can be made fresh from scratch or more commonly bought dried. The water can be replaced by eggs resulting in a yellower colour and firmer texture, while the type of flour used can be altered to create wholemeal pasta and spelt pasta as well as gluten-free options including rice, corn, quinoa, amaranth, buckwheat and combinations thereof. Pasta can also be flavoured with vegetable pureés or powders to create different colours. As such, there are more than three hundred types of pasta and they're used in soups, bakes, warm and cold salads and even as the basis for desserts as well as the more typical bowl of pasta served with any one of number of sauces.

Exactly where pasta originated is unclear, and given it forms a staple in many cultures, invention by a single person or culture is unlikely. While Marco Polo is often credited in popular culture with bringing pasta to Italy from China, pasta definitely existed in Europe prior to the 14th century. Spaghetti was thought to be brought to Sicily by Arab invaders long before this and Italy's spaghetti museum in Pontedassio, Liguria, contains documents dating back

to the 13th century. Pasta-making equipment is depicted on the bas relief of an Etruscan tomb dating from about 400BC, while Cicero was extremely fond of the flat ribbon tagliatelle and mentions pasta in his writings. According to Tasso, tortellini is thought to have been created in the shape of Venus' navel by an innkeeper in the Middle Ages. The two-pronged fork used by rich merchants in Venice gave rise to the three-pronged fork invented for eating spaghetti in the 18th century – although spaghetti was much thicker in those days – and southern Italy is more closely identified with tubular pastas and is the home of many macaroni and spaghetti dishes.

Pasta is high in complex carbohydrates, which are broken down slowly and thus provide the body with energy over a long period. Wholemeal pasta contains a higher concentration of minerals, fibre and vitamins than regular (white) wheat pasta and is therefore more nutritious. While pasta is sometimes thought of as "fattening", this isn't due to the pasta itself but rather the rich creamy, buttery and cheesy sauces that often accompany it. The sauces often contain more kilojoules than the pasta itself! Choosing sauces based on tomatoes, mushrooms, tomato paste, lentils, beans, peas, spices, wine and tofu and small amounts of cheese that only contain a little oil reduces the calorie content.

As pasta contains non-haem iron, which isn't so easily absorbed, adding a food containing vitamin C to the sauce can help increase absorption. A single serve of 100g of boiled pasta has about the same levels of carbohydrates, iron, protein, kilojoules and dietary fibre as 50g of bread but contains more moisture. Due to losses in boiling, pasta does contain relatively less riboflavin, niacin and thiamine because these nutrients are water-soluble. Salt is typically not added during manufacture so the salt content can be controlled by users.

Carbohydrates provide pasta's main source of energy and as only the endosperm of the wheat is used for making (white) wheat pasta, it doesn't contain much of the B group vitamins unless the flour used has been fortified. As B vitamins are water soluble, when pasta is washed and/or boiled, most of these minerals are lost. Wheat pasta is an excellent source of niacin, fibre and thiamine, a good source of magnesium, iron and protein as well as a moderate source of zinc. However, the minerals present in pasta (including iron) are poorly absorbed by the body.

While no nutritional data exists for pastas that have been flavoured and/or coloured with vegetables, the nutrients present depend on the amount and type of vegetable pureés used. Tomato and spinach are most commonly used although saffron, fresh herbs including basil, and beetroot, as well as chocolate can be used.

Wholemeal or wholewheat pasta is made with wholemeal flour or a combination of wholemeal and white flour and thus contains more dietary fibre and vitamin. It's an excellent source of magnesium, niacin, zinc fibre and thiamine and a good source of iron and protein but all are poorly absorbed by the body and heavy losses of the B

group vitamins occur when pasta is boiled or washed as they are water-soluble. In comparison to white wheat pasta, wholemeal pasta contains twice the amount of niacin and more than five times as much thiamine but vitamins in white wheat pasta are more easily absorbed because wholemeal spaghetti contains more phytate, which hinders absorption.

Pastas made with other flours have different nutritional profiles. For example, spelt pasta has a higher protein and fibre content while amaranth and quinoa-based pastas are more nutrient dense. Additionally, gluten-free pastas are typically made from rice, buckwheat, corn, quinoa or amaranth.

COOKING, SERVING AND STORING

TO COOK pasta, boil water in a large pan, making sure it's big enough to allow the pasta to move around and expand. As a general rule use a litre of water for every 100g of pasta. As unsalted water boils faster than salted water – and salt raises the boiling temperature of water – it's best to add any salt once the water has boiled, but given salt toughens the protein, it would be best to use it sparingly. Some people add a tablespoon of olive oil to the cooking water to prevent the pasta sticking together and the water from boiling over, however, this results in the pasta becoming slippery and thus unable to absorb the sauce. Ensure the water has returned to a rapid boil before adding the pasta, short shapes should be added all at once while long straight pasta is best coiled into the water as it softens. Cover with a lid and quickly bring the water back to the boil before removing the lid, reducing the heat slightly, stirring occasionally to prevent the pasta from sticking together.

Cooking times vary depending on the shape and type of pasta used. Wholemeal pasta takes longer to cook than regular wheat pasta and extra care must be taken with gluten-free pastas as they can go gluggy very quickly – some sources suggest steaming rather than boiling to help avoid the dreaded glug.

Dried pasta should be firm to the bite or *al dente* but still tender and it's best to always taste the pasta toward the end of the recommended cooking time to avoid overcooking it – this can make the difference between a good and a great pasta dish. Once cooked, drain the pasta

and immediately turn it back into a pan with the sauce, a heated dish or back into the cooking pan. Don't over-drain the pasta or leave it sitting in a colander where it could stick together. For the sauce to coat it well, pasta needs to be slippery and slightly wet so reserving a little bit of cooking water to spray the pasta with in case you over-drain it is a good idea. Similarly, aim to have the pasta sauce ready by the time the pasta is cooked, particularly if using fresh pasta as this will continue to cook if left sitting around. If you plan to use the pasta cold in a salad, rinse it in cold water to remove excess starch and toss it with a small amount of oil before covering and refrigerating for use later.

TO SERVE, according to the purists, the sauce should only lightly coat the pasta so there's no extra sauce left at the bottom of the pan once the pasta and sauce have been tossed. While the amount of sauce is highly controversial and non-Italian cooks most commonly add too much sauce, ultimately the



amount is a matter of personal taste. As for serving sizes per person, as a general guide allow 60g of fresh pasta for starters and 125g of fresh pasta for mains per person. As dried pasta contains less moisture and is thus lighter than fresh pasta, 90g should be used for starters and 150g for mains.

TO STORE pasta, ensure the storage container is airtight and that you use any pasta in the bottom of the jar before topping it up with newer stock. Dry pasta keeps indefinitely in a cool dry place; fresh pasta should be used within a few days or it can be frozen for up to five days.

TYPES OF PASTA

DURUM WHEAT PASTA

Dried pasta is most commonly made from very finely ground hard durum wheat semolina flour, which has a colour and

texture perfect for making pasta and is considered to be the best flour to make pasta. Semolina is the endosperm or central cone of the wheat grain. Long straight shapes such as spaghetti are made with plain wheat flour; and while all short shapes used to be made using plain flour, shapes using egg pasta are becoming increasingly popular. (All Alfalfa's pastas are vegan). Long pasta shapes made with eggs are typically compressed into waves or rolled into nests as they're more delicate. Slow dried pasta also has a different texture and is less likely to turn to glug when cooked.

WHOLEMEAL PASTA

Wholemeal or wholewheat pasta has a darker colour, nuttier flavour and chewier texture than durum wheat pasta because it's made with wholemeal flour, is more substantial and also takes longer to cook. The proportion of wholemeal flour used varies between manufacturers, although it is has only recently been produced on a commercial scale.

Wholemeal pasta has become increasingly popular as interest in boosting fibre in the diet grows.

SPELT PASTA

Spelt pasta has a mild nutty taste that can make other pastas seem tasteless and although it doesn't overpower the sauce, it does assert itself. Spelt pasta can be more suitable for people with wheat intolerances.

QUINOA+RICE AND AMARANTH+RICE PASTA

These two gluten-free pastas, unlike most gluten-free pasta, hold their shape quite well and also have an enhanced nutrient profile because they contain nutrient-dense pseudograins (amaranth or quinoa). They are wheat-free, vegan and are often suitable for those with mild to severe food intolerances.

SHAPES OF PASTA

While there are no hard and fast rules as such, it's good to keep the following guidelines in mind as some pasta shapes are definitely better suited to particular types of sauces, which comes from the all important ability of a pasta's particular shape and delicacy to hold and support the sauce.

Spaghetti, fettucinni, tialiatelle and linguini are all long-shaped pastas and are recommended for smooth thin sauces based on cream, butter or olive oil and vegetable sauces made from very ▶5

finely chopped ingredients. Fusilli, macaroni and penne are all hollow tubular shapes that support more robust and thicker sauces including tomato, vegetable and cheese sauces. Cannelloni, ravioli and other stuffed pastas are best served with simple sauces based on tomatoes, olive oil or butter so as to not overwhelm the flavours contained in their stuffings. Risi (rice), orzi (barley) and gradrucci (little squares) are more delicately-shaped pastas used for making soups with lighter broths while farfarline (little butterflies) and conchigliette (little shells) are more substantial in size and therefore work better in heartier vegetable soups.

The name of a particular pasta also reveals a lot about its shape – wavy edge pasta has names ending in *rici*, while a name ending in *nidi* means the strands of pasta have been formed into nests. Similarly *lisce* indicates the pasta has a smooth surface, ideal for cheese or cream sauces while *rigate* means it's ridged and better suited for meat sauces. The name can also reveal the size of the pasta: large sizes end in *oni* while *ini* or *ette* indicate the pasta is small. For example, conchiglie are regular-sized couch shell shaped pasta, conchiglioni are larger and conchiglioni are little tiny shells.

Pasta shapes can also be divided into two broad categories – short and long.

■ **LONG** Thin sauces, made from butter, olive oil, cream, grated cheese, finely-chopped herbs or eggs are best served with long pasta and if adding vegetables they should be finely-chopped.

SPAGHETTI is the most well-known long pasta and consists of long round cylindrical solid rods that may vary in thickness and diameter, and which are literally called "thin strings". Spaghetti is very versatile and comes in various thicknesses, often graded by number. The term spaghetti is sometimes also used to describe all long extruded pasta strings.

- ALFALFA STOCKS organic wholemeal spaghetti, also as a known as bigoli and originally developed from the area surrounding Venice known as Veneto.

LINGUINI literally means little tongues and consists of thin long strips of pasta with square cut edges that have an oval section. It is also known as bavetti and unlike spaghetti it's flat. Linguini originated in Campania, the top of

southern Italy where it was produced in early spaghetti factories as well as often being made at home. Linguini is not popular in Italy but was brought to North America by immigrants from Naples and subsequently became very popular. It's often served with bolognese (see MAINS section of RECIPES on the PRODUCTS page of our website for a vegan lentil spaghetti bolognese recipe) or alfredo sauce, which contains cheese, butter, a grinding of nutmeg and a pinch of pepper.

- ALFALFA STOCKS organic durum wheat linguini.

■ **SHORT** Best suited to thicker, heartier sauces. Alfalfa stocks a good range including various gluten-free and spelt options.

CONCHIGLIE is a sturdy type of pasta, which may have a smooth or ribbed surface and its concave shape traps virtually any sauce. Its name comes from



PASTA-MAKING



the couch shells it resembles but is also known as lumache, which means snakes.

- ALFALFA STOCKS organic durum wheat conchiglie.

FUSILLI is another sturdy pasta and while it may vary from short to long, it's best broken into 3cm lengths before cooking to avoid a mess when eating! Fusilli literally means spindles and this extruded spiral or twist-shaped pasta is often served with thick tomato-based sauces and can be substituted for

farfalline in most recipes.

- ALFALFA STOCKS organic spelt fusilli, organic tricolour vege fusilli (flavoured with beetroot, spinach and tomato).

MACARONI is a tubular, short, hollow, sturdy pasta that may be curved (elbow-shaped) or straight. Its name stems from the Italian maccheroni, but macaroni may also be known as tubetti, rigatoni or siltoni, all of which describe long hollow shapes, typically broken into 3cm lengths. It can be boiled and served with most sauces (tomato flavoured with oregano works very well) but also makes a good pasta bake thanks to its hollow shape, which is why it used to be the most commonly found shape.

- ALFALFA STOCKS organic spelt macaroni, organic gluten-free macaroni (made from stoneground white rice flour and then flavoured and coloured with spinach and beetroot).

RIGATONI is a hollow, large tube-shaped pasta that typically has surface grooves and is also sturdy, making it suitable for thicker and chunkier sauces.

- ALFALFA STOCKS organic durum wheat and organic spinach rigatoni.

PENNE or quills, which have become more popular than macaroni of late, consist of hollow tubes that resemble the stems of feathers (hence their name) and their ends are cut diagonally. This makes them

suitable for any sauce although baking them with a cheese sauce or serving them with chunky vegetables is typically recommended.

- ALFALFA STOCKS organic gluten-free brown rice penne; organic gluten-free, Fairtrade amaranth+rice penne and quinoa+rice penne.

■ If you have a recipe you'd like to share (at least vegetarian and perhaps with vegan options), please send it to info@alfalfahouse.org and we can add it in our ever-expanding recipes section on the website.

SOURCES

- *What food is that and how healthy is it?* Jo Rogers, 1995
- *The Cooks Book of Ingredients.* Margaret Brooker, 2005
- *Wholefoods: a cooks kitchen handbook* Nicola Graimes, 2004
- *The Essential Pasta Cookbook* Wendy Stephen (ed). 2004
- www.spiralfoods.com.au
- www.olivegreenorganics.com.au

wild greens

At the moment we're receiving a number of wild greens that are excellent for cleansing and renewing the body, just in time for the approaching spring. They'll be in each Friday after 1pm. Here's the list for August.

CHICKWEED has an earthy flavour. Try it in salads or green smoothies. It eases arthritis and period pain and, when juiced and applied topically, soothes eczema.

DANDELION GREENS are good in salads or green smoothies. It's a proven liver detoxifier. And also a unique diuretic because it replaces expelled

potassium; normally, diuretics deplete the body of potassium. The co-op is currently receiving a few varieties, all of which have a bitter flavour.

MARSHMALLOW stimulates the kidneys and soothes bronchial inflammation and coughs. The perfect addition to a green smoothie, giving it a marshmallow-like texture.

MUSTARD GREENS have, as you'd expect, a hot mustard flavour. As such, they're perfect in curries or stirfrys or even in salads. And they're very high in vitamins A and K.

ST MARY'S THISTLE protects, regenerates and cleanses the liver; reduces congestion in the kidneys, spleen and pelvic region. The fresh is much more effective than the dried. Blend and add to green smoothies. Advance orders only.

STINGING NETTLE is high in iron, and an excellent treatment for anaemia. Advance orders only.

To place an advance order for St Mary's Thistle and Stinging Nettle, email Jamie (produce@alfalfahouse.org) with your name, member number and phone number.

The green smoothie

A green smoothie is a fruit smoothie that includes a serving of leafy greens. It's an excellent breakfast choice – quick to make, filling and sustaining – and it provides healthy carbohydrates along with an abundance of vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, chlorophyll and fibre.



[assets/downloads/general/food_combination_chart.pdf](#)

While green smoothie aficionados recommend a commercial-grade blender, if your blender can give you a smoothie-like consistency from the greens and fruits and a little water, you're

there. That said, if you are blending daily, it would be prudent to invest in a commercial blender.

Current seasonal greens include kale, English spinach, silverbeet and Swiss chard; in-season fruits include pears, apples and citrus. While the variety of fruits is limited in the cooler months, in late spring through autumn, you'll have much more from which to choose.

FURTHER READING *Green for Life* by Victoria Boutenko (MORE AT www.rawfamily.com)

Recipe #1

- 5–6 kale leaves
- 3 apples
- 2 cups of water

Recipe #2

- 1/3 bunch dandelion greens
- 2 apples
- 2 cups water

Recipe #3

- 2 pears
- 1/3 bunch nettle
- 1/2 handful of coriander
- 2 cups water

Recipe #4

- 1 oranges
- 1 lemonade
- 2 handfuls parsley
- 4 kale leaves

OPTIONS: Replace dandelion with chickweed or marshmallow or St Mary's thistle. Add a passionfruit to any recipe.

cut&paste

Sustainable Craft Fest and Makers Market Friday-Sunday Sept. 11-13 at The Red Rattler

6 Faversham Street Marrickville

Cut+Paste takes traditions of craft and re-use and pastes them into a two-day craftacular with cutting edge markets, workshops, performance, organic fair trade treats and Devonshire teas. The festival will showcase local artists, designers and craftspeople; the Makers Market will have for sale some of the best local, fair, sustainable and handmade goods around. Workshops include fresh flower corsage making; book binding; a vegan no-bake treat demo; children's workshops and a 'craft my bike' workshop that gives you the skills to glamourise your bike ride! The festival will close with an evening of fresh organic food, film and performance translating the tactile to the stage.

The festival will open on Friday night with a presentation by WEFT (Women for Education, Freedom and Textiles) a non-profit group supporting refugee women on the Thai-Burma border and displaced women in Burma to earn a fair living wage from their handmade and traditionally-woven textiles.

Supported by Marrickville Council, Reverse Garbage, Alfalfa House and The Red Rattler

Alfalfa's NEW FACES



Jamie



Andrew

Jamie Payne is our Fruit+Veg Coordinator until Renata returns from leave in November. If you have any queries about fruit+veg, please email her at produce@alfalfahouse.org. Or, to check out what's available in fruit+veg check out www.alfalfahouse.org/html/PRODUCTS/fruit+veg.htm



Janne

Andrew McNichol is our Groceries Support Coordinator, a new position to help Monika in the ever-expanding realm of groceries! Among his tasks is taking delivery of the fortnightly Demeter order, a big Wednesday delivery and storeroom maintenance – there's a full job description at www.alfalfahouse.org/html/staff_job_descriptions.htm. Andrew's also doing one of the Tuesday afternoon Shop Coordinator shifts.

Janne King is a new Shop Coordinator on Mondays. Please make them all welcome.

Recipe OF THE MOMENT WITH AIDAN CALABRIA

Red cabbage with yacon

GLUTEN-FREE. VEGAN. SERVES 4
This dish has a delightful sweet and sour flavour that is near impossible to beat as an accompaniment to baked potatoes and mashed kumera.

- 1/2 head red cabbage, grated or finely chopped
- 1 large yacon, grated or finely chopped
- 1 cup of your favourite red wine
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp of agave syrup (raw sugar works just as well)
- 1 onion, chopped fine
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp olive oil

- 1 Fry onion in oil until onion is aromatic
- 2 Add cabbage and yacon, fry 5 mins
- 3 Add red wine, vinegar, salt, pepper and agave syrup and stew for up to an hour or until moisture is evaporated.

■ All past recipes are on the website. Go to www.alfalfahouse.org/html/recipes.htm



My, have the times changed!

New peak times for volunteering announced

- Monday noon–6pm to refill bins and jars after the weekend.
- Tuesday 11am–6pm to help with refilling bins and jars.
- Wednesday noon–4pm to help with refill.
- Thursday 7.30–9.30pm to help with the close up.
- Friday 9am–noon to help with the fruit+veg delivery and anytime after 11am to help refill bins and jars.
- Saturdays 10am–1pm and 3–5pm to help with refilling, etc.
- Sundays, all day but especially 10am–noon to help set up, and 5–7pm to help with close up. It's also a good day to help with refilling.

For more information about volunteering visit www.alfalfahouse.org/html/volunteering.htm or email Nija (coordinator@alfalfahouse.org).

BAY LEAVES

Bay leaves (*Laurus nobililis*) of the culinary variety come from the sweet bay tree, rather than the bay laurel, which is unrelated and poisonous. Confusion has reigned for centuries.

Poets were crowned with wreaths of laurel in Ancient Greece (hence the title of poet laureate), and in the Middle Ages those passing their first university exams were bacca laureates (similar to the modern baccalaureat, meaning laurel berry). The Romans believed bay leaves protected them against the plague and, in English folklore, bay was thought to bring good luck and ward off evil. Rich in symbolism and aroma, a potted bay tree is an appropriate gift for those moving to a new home or starting a new life together.

The bay tree is native to Asia Minor, and is grown all over the Mediterranean.

Bay leaves can be used fresh or dried. Fresh ones are glossy green in colour and more pungent than dried, so a little goes a long way.

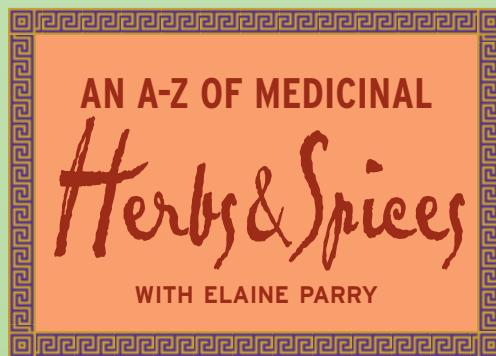


BAY LEAVES

When buying dried ones, look for unbroken leaves and some remnant of colour. In cooking, the leaves are usually left whole for ease of retrieval from the pot.

Fresh or dried, bay leaves are used widely in cooking and make an excellent addition to braised dishes, hearty soups, stocks, stews, casseroles, such as the classic French dish, bouillabaisse. They are a key ingredient of a bouquet garni, along with thyme and parsley stalks. Bay leaves go well with meat, game, seafood, pulses and vegetables and, as a testament to their versatility, they can also be used in milk and cream dishes such as béchamel and rice pudding.

Although the leaf itself is never eaten – it remains indigestible even after lengthy cooking – it does provide some nutritional benefits: it's a good source of vitamins A and C, and it also contains iron and manganese plus small amounts of calcium, potassium and magnesium.



Traditionally, bay leaves have been used for liver, stomach and kidney ailments. Today, herbalists use them internally to stimulate digestion, ease poor digestive function and reduce flatulence. Topically, a cloth soaked in boiled bay leaves can be placed on the chest to relieve chest complaints and coughs. An infusion of bay leaves is diaphoretic (promotes sweating), and so may help to speed up recovery from flu



CALENDULA

by reducing fever. Massaging essential oil of bay leaf into affected areas can help relieve swelling and inflammation, sprains and strains, as well as backache and rheumatic pains.

USES IN RECIPES

BEANS AND BAY Warm a torn bay leaf in extra-virgin olive oil, toss through just-cooked beans for a few minutes and season.

POTATOES WITH BAY Add a bay leaf to the pot when boiling new potatoes.

CAPSICUM AND BAY Stew sweet peppers with whole, fresh bay leaves, sliced garlic and a generous amount of olive oil until soft.

● ALFALFA STOCKS dried bay leaves and sometimes fresh bay leaves (they're in the fridge).

CALENDULA

Calendula (*calendula officinalis*), also known as marigold or pot marigold, has been documented as a medicinal herb since Ancient Egypt. It grows widely in the Mediterranean, where Roman Catholics use it to honour the Virgin Mary. Medicinally, calendula flowers can be made into a skin cream for problematic skin conditions, but it's most popularly used as a tea infusion.

Steeping 1–2 teaspoons of dried calendula flowers in a cup of boiling water and infusing for 10–15 minutes makes an excellent tea, which if drunk three times daily, can soothe gastric inflammation, peptic and duodenal ulcers; and relieve indigestion and problems associated with the gall bladder. For digestive problems, it combines well with marshmallow root. Calendula may help delayed menstruation and painful periods due to its tonifying and anti-inflammatory actions. It may reduce enlarged lymph glands, acne and sebaceous cysts by detoxifying the system. It also contains anti-ageing antioxidants called carotenoids, which promote healthy skin.

Lastly, it may be used both internally and externally to combat fungal infections. As a lotion, poultice or compress, it may help treat any wound or bleeding, bruising or strain, or minor burn or scald. As a soothing external remedy, it combines well with slippery elm.

RECIPE **Detox tea infusion**

- 1 tsp dried calendula flowers
- 1 tsp dried red clover flowers
- 2 tps dried nettle leaves
- 2 cups boiling water

Pour boiling water over herbs and leave to infuse for 10 minutes.

● ALFALFA STOCKS dried calendula flowers. Calendula is also an ingredient in our Ginger Bliss tea.

Elaine Parry is a qualified and accredited naturopath, medical herbalist and clinical nutritionist. She practises at The Buddha Bar Healing Clinic, 434 King Street, Newtown. If you have any questions relating to this column or to herbal medicine or nutrition in general please contact her at elaine.parry@gmail.com.

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