

Dining Dining Dining Dining Dining

Salsas – A Healthy and Delicious Alternative

By Susie Iventosch



Oncology nutritionist Tinrin Chew at home in her kitchen whipping up a healthy meal!

Lafayette resident Tinrin Chew, an oncology nutritionist who works at Alta Bates Hospital and in her own private practice, emailed me to say how she appreciated the "At the Plate" corn salad recipe featured in the column a few weeks ago.

Photo courtesy of Tinrin Chew month, she presents a three-hour nutrition workshop at The Wellness Community.

"I am always looking for healthy, interesting and easy-to-make recipes for my patients and clients," she wrote.

So, of course I wrote back to see if she had any special recipes she'd like to share with our readers.

As it turns out, Tinrin doesn't really follow recipes, but adapts

those she finds to suit her tastes and her clients' needs.

"I really try to encourage people to eat food in its most natural, original form," she said. "By this I mean, if you buy an apple, eat an apple and if you buy a peach, eat a peach ... without altering its natural state."

Tinrin says she rarely serves anything for dessert besides fresh fruit, because most baked desserts have too much sugar and fat.

"In California, we have an abundance of fresh fruit and vegetables," Tinrin pointed out. "When I serve chicken, meat or fish, I usually chop up fresh fruit – whatever is in season – and mix it with spices and herbs as a sort of salsa."

Tinrin says the moisture from the fruit makes food easier to swallow for patients with dry throats and the vitamin C from the fruit, helps the body to absorb the iron from the meat. If the blood count/hemoglobin is low, the fruit contains good enzymes that help to break down protein and helps the digestive system.

For her salsa, Tinrin uses whatever is in season, whether its papaya, kiwi, mango, pineapple, apple, pear, persimmon or pome-

granate. Often she'll add chopped cucumber to whatever fruit she chooses.

"I try to educate the community to eat foods that are in season and grown locally," Tinrin said. "In the fall and winter, focus on root vegetables and squashes. Also, rutabaga, kale, leeks and collard greens, which are all high in iron."

Adopting this eating style, she says, is a good habit for anyone, as it naturally reduces intake of fats and salt.

The Wellness Community is located at the border of Lafayette, Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill.

"Anyone in the community dealing with cancer should know about this place," Tinrin said. "They offer a variety of programs including support groups, educational seminars by health care professionals, exercise groups, music and more ... all for free!"

Tinrin Chew can be reached at (925) 299-1209. For more information on The Wellness Community, please visit: www.twcwa.org/

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The Rise of the Locavores

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Gail Feenstra is a food system analyst for the Program; her task is to evaluate the carbon footprint of food. "It's not straight forward," says the researcher, "we have to calculate the energy that goes into fertilizers and pesticides, whether the crop is grown outside or in a hothouse, what packaging and transportation system was used, or the possible wastes. The fact that a food is local is only one of the components."

As a rule, Feenstra believes that organic food is less energy consuming, but the low yield of this kind of agriculture can throw the balance off. "There are other things that people need to be thinking of when it comes to their eating habits," she adds, "a vegetarian diet has less impact, and among meats, red is the most energy consuming."

In spite of the doubts and ambiguities, she believes that the locavore movement has a positive impact, "it's making people more aware of the limits of our natural resources, and shows them that we have the opportunity to change our behaviors," Feenstra concludes.

The carbon footprint is not the foremost concern of the Board of Supervisors; locavoring makes sense because it supports local farmers. Katherine Lyddan, who participates on the County's task force, is the Executive Director of the Brentwood Farming Land Trust.

For Lyddan, a Moraga mom, convincing people to eat locally produced food is a matter of survival. Brentwood is the largest farming region closest to Lamorinda, totalling 12,000 acres, but according to Lyddan, "The farmers were having a hard time making a living in local small farms on the urban edge."

She highlights that local food is fresher, has a higher nutrient value, creates a strong re-

lationship with the seasons and the environment and reduces the distance that food travels. "As a matter of national and food security it is important to feed ourselves," insists Lyddan. "To feed the Bay Area, we probably need the Central Valley," she believes, "but not strawberries from Chile." The recent incident of salmonella-contaminated tomatoes supports the argument that it is safer to know from where your food comes.

If health, national security, local economy, energy efficiency, a sense of place and connection to the earth are not enough reasons for you to become a locavore, most locavores will tell you that locally grown food just tastes better.

Locavore Resources:

- Local nurseries to get your garden going.
- Farmers' Markets, Orinda on Saturday morning, Moraga on Sunday morning.
- Supermarkets: Safeway gets its corn from Brentwood, ask for other products; some Longs Drugs try to get their dairy and produce locally, ask the management; Diablo Foods, Trader Joes: Check labels and ask management to encourage local products.
- Restaurants: Gigi, Chow, Amoroma and Terzetto advertise use of local products.
- Individual farms: Hurst family, St Mary's Road.
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) delivers individual baskets weekly to subscribers. "Outside the Box" in Walnut Creek has a drop off in Lafayette. Brentwood Land Trust, for U-picks and visits: www.brentwoodaglandtrust.org

Tinrin Chew's Mango-Avocado Salsa (To serve over grilled fish or chicken)
Ingredients
2 ripe mangoes, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces
1 avocado, firm yet ripe, cut into bite-sized chunks
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 small garlic clove, pressed
Juice of 1/2 lemon or lime
1/3 cup cilantro leaves, diced
Dash of sea salt
Dash of sugar

Directions
To grill salmon filet, season to taste and place filet skin side down on a piece of foil. Cook over medium-high flame for two minutes, then tent filet with foil and continue to cook for another six or so minutes, depending upon the thickness of the filet. For swordfish steaks, cook approximately four minutes per side at medium high heat, again depending upon thickness.



This recipe is available on our web site. Go to: http://www.lamorindaweekly.com
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LAMORINDA's Restaurants
-- updated June 25, 2008 --
Table listing various restaurants, their addresses, and phone numbers. Categories include American, BBQ, Burger Joint, Cafe, Chinese, California Cuisine, Coffee Shop, Continental, Hawaiian Grill, Indian, Italian, Japanese, Jazz Dinner Club, Mediterranean, Mexican, Mountain Mike's Pizza, Sandwiches/Deli, Singaporean/Malaysian, Seafood, Steak, Tea, Thai, and others.

The Lamorinda Weekly (LW) Restaurant Guide is not paid advertising; our intent is to provide a useful reference guide. We hope that we have included all Lamorinda restaurants on this page, except those that told us they did not wish to be listed. LW is not liable for errors or omissions. In the event that we have inadvertently printed misinformation or excluded a restaurant please let us know (info@lamorindaweekly.com) so that we may correct our list for the next issue.