

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. Tinrin also volunteers at The Wellness Community, a non-profit organization offering comprehensive support for cancer pa-

Photo courtesy of Tinrin Chew
tients and their loved ones. Every other 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 pomegranate. 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.twcba.org/

The Wellness Community, 3276 McNutt Avenue, Walnut Creek, CA. 94597, Phone (925) 933-0107, Fax: (925) 933-0249

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 ½ lemon or lime
- 1/3 cup cilantro leaves, diced
- Dash of sea salt
- Dash of sugar

Directions

Mix all in a bowl and refrigerate until ready to serve. We served this delicious salsa over grilled swordfish, wild salmon and boneless chicken breast and it was wonderful with all three. You can substitute fruits and quantities of ingredients to suit your tastes. We also, sprinkled the dish with paprika for a dash of extra color.

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.

