

K's Kitchen: Pasta with grilled vegetables

By Kathryn Reed

One of the great things about this recipe is that it can be served hot or cold, as a main dish or a side.

I made this as an entrée. However, the next day I had some of it cold, so then it was more like a pasta salad. And like so many dishes, the flavors were more pronounced on Day 2.

It's also possible to change up the vegetable combination to your favorites or whatever you have on hand.

Grilling isn't essential, but there is something about that flavor that is hard to replicate. The other options would be to roast or sauté the veggies.

Most any pasta works, but I always find something like corkscrew (rotini), fusilli or penne work best for a salad and when there isn't a heavy sauce.



Pasta with Grilled Vegetables

1 zucchini

1 yellow squash

1 red pepper

2 medium tomatoes

4 ounces mushrooms

1 pound pasta

Vinaigrette

1/3 C olive oil

3 T balsamic vinegar

2 T veganaise or mayonnaise

1/2 T Dijon mustard

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2 tsp dried basil

1/2 tsp salt

Fresh ground pepper

Cook pasta according to directions.

Cut vegetables into bite size pieces. Place in bowl.

Mix vinaigrette ingredients together. Toss mixture onto vegetables. Cook in grill basket over medium-high heat. (The length of time will depend on the vegetables; they could be done in 10 minutes.) If any marinade is leftover, save it.

Drain pasta. Add veggie mixture and remaining marinade. Toss and serve.

An athlete's ode to the potato

By Michael Easter, Outside

I spent the first few years of my life in Idaho and have always eaten potatoes—white, usually baked, sometimes mashed or sautéed with eggs. This alone doesn't make me unique—potatoes are the largest vegetable crop in the United States—but the rate at which I eat the root vegetable might make me a standout.

I consume them four nights a week and will proudly tell you that a baked russet potato with sour cream is my favorite food. Especially the oversized variety you find accompanied by fatty slabs of prime rib served in Western saloons or smoky casino diners in small gambling towns. (The two best baked potatoes in the country, for what it's worth, are found at the Pioneer Saloon in Ketchum, Idaho, and the Virgin River Hotel and Casino River Café in Mesquite, Nevada.)

I believe you can largely forget about exotic, exorbitant eats like goji berries, chia seeds, and coconut oil. The humble spud is the real superfood.

[Read the whole story](#)

Review: Lake House restaurant more than satisfies

By Yolanda Nussdorfer

There is a relatively new restaurant in town that is all the rage. Open for about nine months, the Lake House restaurant in South Lake Tahoe is turning heads.

Being a part-time local, I finally had a chance to dine here and I was very much impressed. Having recently visited a couple other fine dining options that once held the title of “my favorite,” I was pleased to have a new contender. The Lake House was nothing short of excellent in food, atmosphere, and staff so you could imagine my excitement when the owner, Jeff Sparrow agreed to be interviewed.

The Lake House offers a full menu that is “fine dining without the pretension,” says Sparrow. You will find an array of dishes that are wonderfully devised and know exactly what the ingredients are. You won’t find any words you cannot pronounce and at the risk of sounding gauche, I like knowing what I am ordering. You can find their dinner menu [here](#).



A variety of dishes are worthy of ordering at the Lake House in South Lake Tahoe.
Photo/Yolanda Nussdorfer

We had a hard time deciding what to order, as most everything

on the menu sounded fabulous. In their appetizer section, the chef prepares a “daily risotto” and they also have a rotating seasonal salad. The main portion of the menu remains fairly consistent, but both the owners and chefs are constantly bouncing ideas off of one another to create new items. They also offer a wide selection of beer and wine.

You will find comfortable seating with a classy vibe. Everything from the stained concrete floors to the rustic chandeliers to the bluesy mellow music are all very welcoming. The wall of antique gold mirrors against a neutral textured wall is prime example of its homey feeling. On the walls are large canvases of Lake Tahoe prints to round it all out.

We started with an assortment of calamari, escargot, and the wedge salad. We decided sharing is caring. My son ate most of the calamari, but of what I could steal, it was excellent. The escargot I would order again in a second, giving way to the perfect combination of garlic and butter. I typically order the wedge salad in many restaurants and have never had one with candied walnuts before. It was an excellent addition and I will probably add this touch to the one I make at home.

After revising our plan a few times, the kids decided they would order off the happy hour menu. Just a note, there is no kids’ menu, but mine are older and have no problem with “adult dining.” If you have little ones, my suggestion is to have a date night.

I decided to go with the chicken marsala because I had not had it in so long. It was a large portion. My husband decided on the scallops and prawn chimichurri, which he was beyond thrilled with and convinced the people sitting next to us to order as well when they asked him about it.



The Lake House restaurant on Emerald Bay Road is one of South Lake Tahoe's newest eateries. Photo/Yolanda Nussdorfer

Ever since we visited Italy, my kids have been obsessed with gelato. When they found it on the menu, they were just delighted. We also ordered the creme brulee, which had a touch of what I thought was lemon, but after looking at the menu again discovered it was grand marnier. Even better.

After our dessert was a little surprise of chocolate peppermint bliss. It is sweet and salty and I am so glad I don't have a sweet tooth because I would buy this by the pound. When I asked the chef about this creation, he just smiled as if he knew this "crack" confection would have us coming back for more.

When your bill arrives, it will come in a guest book. Please sign it, the owners do take the time to read it.

I am so excited for the future of this place. Jeff and Misty Sparrow have future plans for outdoor patio seating and for a food truck. I spend part of my time in Phoenix and have grown to love food trucks. They are no longer the beat up, unsanitized boxes they once were. Today, some of them are top of the line gourmet. I believe Tahoe would benefit from a Lake House food truck for town events, or just to run some of that chocolate over to our house.

*Yolanda Nussdorfer is an artist and family travel curator. She documents travel and everyday adventures through art and photography. She blogs at **Inspire and Wander**, and can also be*

found on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Raley's will fill beer growlers – but not in Calif.

By Sonya Sorich, Sacramento Business Journal

Go ahead and grab the eggs and produce. I'm waiting for this nice employee to pour me 64 ounces of cold beer.

In the increasingly cutthroat grocery world, this scenario is no longer a mere fantasy.

Visit the Raley's location at 1630 Robb Drive in Reno and you can purchase a growler, a jug that's filled with one of eight beers on tap in the store. But the concept won't be coming to Raley's stores in California soon. It's illegal for a retailer to fill a growler here, according to the California Craft Brewers Association, which says filling growlers is a privilege associated with beer-manufacturing licenses in the state.

Read the whole story

K's Kitchen: Quesadillas with

more than cheese

By Kathryn Reed

While I like cheese, so often at restaurants it's difficult to taste anything but the cheese in a quesadilla. That is why at home I prefer to be light on the cheese and heavy on the other stuff.

With that thinking, that is why there is not an exact quantity for the cheese in this recipe. It's really a personal preference on how much you want of the veggie-bean mixture as well as cheese.

I tend to use Monterey jack, but the type of cheese is also a personal preference. I also use flour tortillas, but corn would be just fine.

I used an ear of corn that had already been cooked. It would be possible to use raw corn; it would just need to be cooked a little more as opposed to heated.

It would be better to use fresh tomatoes, but I didn't have any.



Spinach, Garbanzo Bean Quesadillas

Couple tablespoons water

10 ounces spinach

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 ear corn, cut from cob

15.5 ounce can garbanzo beans

14.5 ounce diced tomatoes

1 bunch chives, minced

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp chili powder

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cayenne pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground cumin

Tortillas

Cheese, grated

Salsa

Cilantro, optional

Heat water in pan over medium heat, add spinach. Cook until wilted. Add corn, beans and tomatoes. Mash the beans.

Add chives, chili powder, cayenne pepper and cumin.

Cook for about 10 minutes until heated through. Adjust seasonings as so desired.

In skillet on medium heat place one tortilla in pan, add veggie mix and cheese. Place another tortilla on top. Press down. Flip quesadilla when bottom is browned. When other side is brown and cheese is melted, it's done.

Add salsa and fresh cilantro is so desired.

Cantina restaurant in SLT for sale

The Cantina restaurant in South Lake Tahoe is almost an institution. But it might not be around much longer.

A for sale sign has been placed on the corner of this Emerald Bay Road establishment.

“After 20 stressful years of operating two restaurants, we are trying to scale back in preparation for an approaching retirement, as Candice and I are both in our 60s now. Evan’s has been open for nearly 30 years and will be continuing to operate under our direction for the indefinite future,” Evan Williams told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Evan and Candice Williams own the Cantina and Evan’s restaurants.

Philip Fagan, who is a partner in the business, owns the property where Cantina sits. He is open to leasing the building.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Placer County easing food truck regulations

Placer County is adapting its rules to make it easier for food truck owners to operate, while ensuring their food products are safely prepared.

“It’s not just greasy food anymore,” said Jim Sweet, co-owner of JJ’s Smoke ‘N’ BBQ out of Loomis. “People are really doing unique items on the menu. Here on our truck, everything is pretty much made from scratch.”

Earlier this month, in an effort to make the required health and safety inspection process easier and more accessible, the environmental health division of Placer’s health and human services department had its first “food truck roundup.” The county invited food trucks to line up for inspection at a parking lot at Sierra College in Rocklin, where they can pass a health checkup and receive their yearly health permit. Previously, a much less efficient practice had the truck owners make individual appointments at county offices in Auburn.

Environmental health staff conduct their inspections, checking to make sure food is stored at proper temperatures, basic sanitation practices are followed and commercial-grade equipment meets standards, among other items. Then, the trucks are permitted for another year.

The county has explored other innovative ways of making the regulatory process more convenient for food truck operators, such as working with neighboring environmental health departments at nearby counties to honor a food truck’s last inspection report without imposing additional fees, so they don’t need go through another full inspection in Placer County. If the initial check of a new food truck’s build and equipment has been approved by a neighboring county, then they are good to go.

Southern cooking comes to the mountains



It would be hard to imagine anyone leaving X Crows hungry.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

There was a time when hotel restaurants were just a convenience for travelers; no one living in that town would ever step foot inside of it. X Crows is proving that things have changed – and in an extremely tasty way.

This restaurant inside Hotel Becket in South Lake Tahoe is a destination unto itself. The X = 10.

Executive Chef Trent Bissell hails from Alabama, which is perfect for this restaurant that boasts of all things Southern.

Using a massive pellet smoker, Bissell is able to slow cook the various meats – even vegetables – to get that flavor like no other method does. The brisket and pork butt are smoked overnight; the other meats need less time and are cooked fresh each day.



Executive Chef Trent Bissell at the smoker. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Up to 500 pounds of meat can be cooked at once. So far, no bears have come to investigate the outside smoker, which has been named Arlene.

Bissell calls that smoky aroma “Southern cologne.” Pork, including ribs and his own sausage recipe, are what he specializes in.

Starting with the black eye pea hummus (\$8) we knew this wasn’t going to be a typical Tahoe meal. Often hummus has a bland, almost chalky taste. No so with this one. The benne seed crackers were a nice accompaniment; and there were plenty

of them.

The smoked portabella (\$13) was hefty. Even cutting it in half I had a hard time getting my mouth around it, but once I did the flavor was outrageously good. While this is the only vegetarian entrée on the menu, Bissell said he has ideas for more.

Like most barbecue joints, sides are a big part of the offerings. They range from smoky greens (which Sue raved about) to house cut fries (some of the best I've had) to stone ground cheddar grits. Specials are also common, with Sue loving the fresh squash mix.

And some of those sides would make for a good vegetarian meal.



Cocktails are refreshing and the hummus outstanding. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Sue opted to have the fried catfish (\$18) mostly because it's not something you see on a Tahoe menu. She wasn't

disappointed.

It was served with a super-hot sauce that even I couldn't handle. It also came with Bissell's Alabama white sauce, which is more like an aioli. Because it is mayonnaise based it is not on the table with the other sauces. This white sauce was terrific with the fish, portabella and fries.

To pay homage to the mountain that is across the street the menu includes the Heavenly happy meal (\$17) – chopped pork or chopped chicken sandwich, with fries, a shot of Jameson and a PBR.

Take-outs are encouraged, with sides being available by the pint and quart. Entrees are priced a little less for those taking it to go.

Desserts, as the chef says, are meant for two. The banana pudding (\$7) could serve four. Two days before I had had my friend Sharla's banana pudding, and she's from Kentucky, so I knew what good banana pudding tasted like. She might want to go to X Crows and save herself the trouble of making it.

Whiskey is the dominate drink of choice here, with more than 60 to choose from.

"Whiskey and barbecue are best friends. A lot of bourbons have a smokiness," Bissell told *Lake Tahoe News*.

If straight whiskey isn't your thing, I recommend the Southern Sazerac (\$10) – Bulleit rye, absinthe wash, burnt orange peel and Peychaud bitters.

Beer is the other dominate drink choice, with about 30 bottles and six on tap. Wine and other specialty cocktails are also available.

One of the most memorable things about dinner at X Crows was the service. It was off the charts good. Meesh is more than just a server.

She moved to Tahoe from Pennsylvania last year. She quickly learned about the Tahoe Food Hub in Truckee and now X Crows is sourcing some of its food from there. Meesh is also teaching the chef how to grow herbs and vegetables.

“I have a farming background. I love food,” she told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Her love of food is evident in how she describes the various dishes, gets excited about all the vinegar-based homemade barbecue sauces and helps diners choose what to order.

What she brings to the table is a level of service that is hard to find in the basin. She was as refreshing as the restaurant itself.



The plan is to eventually sell the homemade sauces. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Notes:

- X Crows is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.
 - Hours are 7am-9pm Sunday-Wednesday; closing at 11pm on Friday and Saturday.
 - Tables are inside and outside. The bar seats 10.
 - Dogs are welcome.
 - The only negative is how loud the music is across the street at Heavenly Village.
-

Study: French fries linked to higher risk of death

By CNN

How your spuds are cooked is key to your health. People who eat fried potatoes two or more times a week double their risk of an early death compared to those who avoid them, a recent study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found.

Eating potatoes that have not been fried was not linked to a similar early mortality risk, the researchers noted.

“Fried potatoes consumption is increasing worldwide,” warned Nicola Veronese, lead author of the study and a scientist at the National Research Council in Padova, Italy.

In 2014, Americans consumed 112.1 pounds of potatoes per person, according to the National Potato Council. Of that total, 33.5 pounds were fresh potatoes, the remaining 78.5

pounds were processed. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the majority of processed potatoes Americans eat are French fries.

Read the whole story

K's Kitchen: Enchiladas with quinoa

By Kathryn Reed

Healthy and enchiladas are not always two words that go together. This recipe changes that thinking.

The flavors of this recipe are outstanding.

One of the nice things about quinoa is that it freezes well. I've gotten into the habit of cooking up more than what I need for any given recipe and then freezing the rest. This allows me to speed up the process for the next recipe.

I used the five cheese Mexican blend that comes shredded.

Corn or flour tortillas will work. The number you need will depend on the size you use.

Leftovers freeze well.



Quinoa Sweet Potato Black Bean Enchiladas

1 C cooked quinoa

Tortillas

2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed

Oil

1 medium yellow onion, chopped

1 15 ounce can black beans, drained

$\frac{1}{4}$ C-plus cilantro, chopped

10 ounce can red enchilada sauce

8 ounces cheese, shredded

16 ounce jar fire roasted salsa verde

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

If you don't have prepared quinoa, cook some according to directions.

Sauté onion and sweet potato in oil over medium heat until potato is soft. Add black beans and cilantro. Divide mixture evenly into tortillas.

Cover bottom of 9 x 13 pan with enchilada sauce.

Place filled tortillas into pan. Cover with cheese and salsa. Bake for 15 minutes or until cheese is melted.

Optional to serve with extra cilantro, guacamole or sour cream.