Farmers market in S. Tahoe for people needing food assistance

The Food Bank of El Dorado County, in partnership with California Emergency FoodLink, will provide its first free farmers market of the season Aug. 19 at 1:30pm n South Lake Tahoe.

This event takes place at Saint Theresa Church at 1041 Lyons Ave.

This market will provide fresh produce to El Dorado County residents who are currently in need of emergency food assistance.

This outreach is a collaborative effort between the Food Bank of El Dorado County and California Emergency Foodlink of Sacramento. To meet the demanding needs in current tough economic times, both the Food Bank and Foodlink have reached out to growers from as far away as the Central Valley this season to acquire a great quantity of quality produce that will be distributed in three regional events over the two months.

For more information, call Mike Sproull at the Food Bank at (530) 621.9950.

K’s Kitchen: Trying to re-

create Chinese dish in America

By Kathryn Reed

I need another lesson – or lessons.



I did OK following the recipe, but it just wasn't the same as when I made it in Beijing earlier this year. I needed my two Chinese instructors telling me how to chop, stir and what to add. But that wasn't happening no matter how hard I tried to channel their wisdom.

Still, I think I did pretty well with this recipe. (See below.)

First, I had to shop for the ingredients. Oh darn, a trip to San Francisco. I pointed to the recipe for what I needed – some is written in English, some in Chinese. And the guy at this particular shop read the Chinese better.

Next stop was the Chinese grocery store to get soy sauce and rice wine vinegar. Yes, you can get these at a regular U.S. store. But what amazed me is the price difference. I wish I had bought more while I was in the The City because it's so much cheaper even being imported from China.

While my sister, mom and I visited my niece this spring in Beijing, one of the things we did was take a cooking class. It included shopping for the ingredients, a lesson in condiments, and then the cooking.

One of the dishes we chose (maybe I chose it!) was the Five Spices Doufu. I learned that tofu is the Japanese word for the soy product and doufu is what they call it in China.

At the market it was amazing to see the varieties of tofu, uh, doufu. I’m used to it in a container with the three choices of firmness. In Beijing it was like being at a small meat counter with the variety of doufu available.

While the recipe calls for pork, we left that out to accommodate my vegetarianism.

I don’t know what is in the five spice powder that I bought in San Francisco. And it might be available closer, but I was in SF for a Giants game, so no biggie to buy some.

Five Spices Doufu

Firm tofu, 500g

Minced pork, 50g

Spices:

Ginger minced, 1 T

Garlic minced, 1 T

Spring onion, 2 pieces finely chopped, separate green part and white part

Five spices powder, 1 tsp

Seasoning 1: (add during cooking)

Sugar, 1 tsp

Light soy sauce, 4 tsp

Dark soy sauce, 2 tsp

Wine vinegar, 2 tsp

Seasoning 2: (add at the end of cooking)

Green part of spring onion

Sesame oil, 2 tsp

Method: Cut doufu into 0.5cm thick slice.

Season wok with 1 T oil, medium heat, add doufu inside, pan fry doufu until both sides become light golden color. Take out.

Season wok with 1 T oil, add minced pork, stir until all separate and change color, about 20 seconds, add ginger, garlic, white part of spring onion and five spices powder, stir until fragrant, about 10 seconds.

Add rice wine 2tsp, then water 300ml, add sugar, light soy sauce, dark soy sauce, add doufu, mix, cover. Cook over medium low heat until water is gone, about 20 minuets.

Add seasoning green spring onion and sesame oil, mix, serve.



Various types of doufu at market in Beijing. Photos/Kathryn Reed



Pam (sister), Cleo (mom), and Veronica (niece) prepare the ingredients.



Veronica, Pam and Cleo cook up several dishes in Beijing.

Cocktail contest raises money for Barton Foundation

Barton Foundation’s annual Signature Cocktail Contest is Sept. 8 from 5:30-8pm at Riva Grill in South Lake Tahoe. Must be at least 21 to attend.

The contest is the kick off to the Festival of Trees and Lights which is the first weekend in December at MontBleu in Stateline. Both events benefit the expansion and renovation of Barton’s Community Clinic.

Taste specialty cocktails by local mixologists, heavy

appetizers, music from Cool Black Kettle. Watch our local “celebrities” ham it up while they vote for “Best Cocktail,” and then cast your ballot for “Most Congenial Bartender.”

Tickets are $25 through Sept. 7 and $30 at the door. Purchase them online or call (530) 543.5614.

Ideas for packing school lunches full of brain food

By Johnathan Wright, Reno Gazette-Journal

Pity the poor peanut butter and jelly. Today’s school lunch boxes, primed by food culture, offer an opportunity to pack far more than the classic default sandwich.

Ban the bread (sliced, that is) for a day in favor of sliders built with:

Chicken and Alfredo-tossed broccoli;

Soft soft lavash lined with ham and vegetable cream cheese rolled up to make pinwheel; or

Naan spread with hummus, then folded over cucumber and honey.

Another lunch box strategy: presenting foods children already like in unexpected ways.

A cold ham and cheese casserole uses up leftover pork; if you like, substitute leftover chicken or hamburger. Tortellini vegetable skewers are like pasta salad on an (edible) stick.

Read the whole story

A filling lineup for North Shore food and wine festival

The 26th Annual Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival, considered one of Lake Tahoe's premier gourmet events, is scheduled for Sept. 9-11 at the Village at Northstar in Truckee.

The three-day event kicks off Sept. 9 with the 8th Annual Village Grape Stomp and Vineyard Luncheon, with costumed teams furiously stomping fresh-from-the-vineyard grapes trying to extract the most juice. The team entry fee ($200 for four and $50 for those solo) includes grape stomping, wine and beer tasting and alfresco luncheon. For those not wanting to get their feet dirty, lunch/tasting only tickets are $40/person.

Day two of the festival showcases some of the best culinary programs in the region, including three free outdoor seminars in the heart of the Village at Northstar. Mark Estee, chef and owner of Truckee-based Moody's Bistro & Lounge and Burger Me, which was featured on the Food Network's Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives, hosts "Outdoor Grilling" at 11am. Chef Jason Gronlund, senior director of culinary and the executive chef for Hard Rock Café International, hosts "Cookin' Hard Rock Style" at 12:15pm. Local legend Douglas Dale of Wolfdale's Cuisine Unique in Tahoe City wraps up the free programs with "Cuisine Unique Cooking Demo" at 2:45pm as he guides attendees in finding new elements, ingredients, techniques and unconventional food combinations.

Also free to the public is the Gourmet Marketplace Trade Fair, where festival-goers can sample and purchase olive oils, tapenades, olives, vinegars and gourmet products. There will

also be artisan jewelry makers, photography exhibits and the North Tahoe Plein Air Art Show and Sale throughout the Village.

Saturday's ticketed events are many and include wine and food events, as well as a distillery party.

Day Three (Sept. 11) is the pinnacle of the festival with the Culinary Competition and Grand Tasting. It's a gastronomic dream as 30 of the area's finest restaurants, caterers and chefs from the Lake Tahoe region are paired with premium world-class wineries charged with creating the best marriage of food and wine. Tickets are $75/person online through Sept. 9 and $90/person at the door.

For a complete list of festival programs, event descriptions, cost and to purchase tickets, go online.

Port-of-Subs owner molds Sparks sandwich shop into 150 franchises

By Bill O'Driscoll, Reno Gazette-Journal

John Larsen's 36-year voyage as a purveyor of submarine sandwiches has been anything but calm.

He's faced some of the harshest seas a businessman can imagine – and took them, in character with his upbringing, head-on.

"You do whatever you got to do. I never took 'no' for an answer," said Larsen, co-founder and CEO of Port of Subs, which he helped build from a small Sparks shop nearly four

decades ago into 150 franchise and company-owned restaurants in Nevada and seven other states across the West.

At age 62, Larsen has passed much of the day-to-day duties of his company on to colleagues while he oversees the broader mission of growing Port of Subs, launched with his former wife, Pat, in 1975 when they acquired the Sub Shop in Sparks.

But Larsen stays close to the wheel. On any given day, he's in his company office off Mae Anne Avenue in northwest Reno abiding by a lifelong belief in hard work and a tenacity never to give up.

"I'm still CEO," he said of his presence.

When the risk of sinking comes along, as it has several times over the years and most recently in the recession, Larsen has found ways to keep the ship afloat.

"I love the game," he said of business. "The word 'failure' just drives me. It scares me so bad. I just dig down deep and work harder."

Read the whole story

Art, flavor and history of cheese in one event

Mose Roenberg of UC Davis will dissect cheese making's more than 9,000-year evolution to become a unique and complex technology enabling more than 2,000 different cheeses.

The event is Aug. 11, with a 5:30pm no -host bar and the program at 6pm.

Cost is $10, which includes cheese tasting.

It is at the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences, 291 Country Club Drive, Incline Village.

Although cheese making is an ancient art, modern cheese production relies on the application of cutting-edge science and state-of-the-art fermentation technologies. If cheese was developed today, it would be hailed as a triumph of biochemistry.

Modern cheese making depends on the wise application of enzymes and microorganisms, complex fermentation approaches, sophisticated engineering and a dynamic series of biochemical cascades during cheese ripening (aging). A great diversity of cheese is produced from the same raw materials. The attributes of cheese are dramatically influenced by the climatic, geological and agricultural characteristics of the region. Cheese Terroir provides unique cheeses from specific regions.

Taste a broad array of cheeses produced all over the world and discover the (almost) magical way by which milk is transformed into a rich spectrum of cheeses differing in their flavor, aroma, texture and appearance.

Rosenberg is a professor and dairy specialist.For additional details, contact Leanne Burns, (775) 881.7562, ext. 7474 or lkburns@ucdavis.edu.

Winemaker dinner to help Barton Foundation

Capisce in Zephyr Cove is partnering with Dry Creek to host a

winemaker’s dinner on Aug. 16 starting with cocktails at 5:30pm, then dinner at 6:30pm.

A portion of the proceeds will benefit Barton Foundation’s Community Health Endowment.

For more information and reservations, contact Capisce at (775) 580.7500.

K’s Kitchen: Tropical inspired vegetable marinade

By Kathryn Reed

Summer vegetables mean barbecue season. I think I could have grilled veggies every night for dinner.



It’s that savory taste of veggies from the farmers’ market marinated in some concoction that is never the same that makes me love this time of year. Shopping at a farmers’ market is also likely to mean the veggies are never the same because it’s all about buying what is in season.

There is no wrong combo of things to cook together. It’s a matter of what sounds good. Hopefully, you know what tastes good together, too.

The key to a medley of vegetables is a variety of color. All green is not very appetizing no matter how delicious the marinade or the food is.

Peppers are a good way to add color. Carrots are too, though

they take longer to cook. Yellow squash, red onions, cauliflower – good to mix with all those green veggies.

Marinades come in all flavors. I tend to mix my own instead of buying something at the store. Ones in the store are often full of sugar, salt and things I cannot pronounce.

As I was wrapping up my summer drink research, I carried over that tropical mindset into a marinade. It turned out pretty darn good.

I don't list measurements because I didn't write any down as I was cooking. And the bigger reason is the quantity of marinade needed depends on how many veggies you are grilling.

When making a marinade, it's safest to do so in a bowl so you taste it before putting it is on the veggies. Then taste a veggie during the day to see how the marinade is holding up. You can adjust flavors as you go along.

I tend to cut up enough to nearly fill a 9 x 13 glass dish. Then I refrigerate the marinating veggies for the better part of the day. Sue grills them up in a basket that is like a wok for the grill, but has holes in it.

This is a main dish for me, but can be a side dish. Served with rice pilaf (I do it from scratch, not a box) and fresh fruit (from the farmers' market) and a good white wine (from the foothills) and it's a delicious meal – and you are eating sustainably.

Summer Marinade

1 bunch cilantro, chopped

Juice of several limes

Juice of 1 lemon

Several cloves garlic, minced

1 bunch green onions, chopped

Olive oil, as needed

Rum, not too much

Garlic salt, lightly season

Mix ingredients together in a bowl. Pour over chopped vegetables when flavor is just right. Refrigerate a few hours before cooking.

Opinion: Taking note of superior El Dorado County winery

To the community,

I am proud to announce the top winner in the state of California of the prestigious “Golden Bear Award”, my neighbor Windwalker Winery.

Of the 2,800 wineries in the state of California, the owners of Windwalker Winery in Fairplay, Jim and Alanna Taff, and winemaker Dominic Mantei, took top honors for the Best Red Wine in the entire state at the California State Fair for their Shady Lady 2008 Primitivo.

In addition, they were ranked Third Winery Overall in the State.

I just wanted to share the good news and ask you to join me in recognizing their wonderful accomplishment.

Ray Nutting, chairman El Dorado County Board of Supervisors