K’s Kitchen: Toppings for corn on the cob

By Kathryn Reed

Corn on the cob cooked on the barbecue is a summertime ritual.

And now is the peak season in California for these kernels of goodness. But that doesn’t mean you won’t find them at farmers’ markets most of the summer. And, yes, there is plenty at grocery stores – but farm fresh makes a world of difference.

When buying them, always peel the husk back a little to look at the ear to see if the kernels look good. Some say white corn is sweeter, while yellow has more of a corn taste.

I don’t husk them until I’m ready to use the ears. And keeping them in the fridge will also seal in the moisture.

Normally a little butter is all I put on corn, but last weekend we tried two spreads. I liked them equally, but Sue preferred the red pepper concoction. They are totally different. It would make more sense not to serve them at the same time unless you have a large group. Each recipe would be good on four ears.

Mayo may be substituted for the veganaise.

It takes about 8 minutes for corn to cook on the grill. Be sure to turn it as it cooks.



Feta and Mint Spread

2 T (generous) crumbled feta

1 T unsalted butter

2 T mint, minced

1 T lime juice

Combine all ingredients with a fork. Spread on cooked corn.

Spicy Red Pepper Spread

¼ C (heaping) roasted red pepper (from a jar)

2 T veganaise

2 cloves garlic

½ medium lemon, juiced

¼ tsp paprika

¼ tsp kosher salt

Dash red pepper flakes

Blend all ingredients in blender. Spread on cooked corn.

Study: Most people not cooking chicken correctly

By KCRA-TV

A study from UC Davis finds most people are making significant mistakes when it comes to cooking chicken.

It found that 65 percent of them did not wash their hands before touching poultry – in fact, half of them washed their chicken instead.

“But what happens is the water splatters and there’s an aerosol that’s created,” said Christine Bruhn, director of the Center for Consumer Research at UC Davis. “And salmonella or any pathogen that could be on that chicken is spread for 2 feet all around your sink.”

Washing the chicken is a habit that Nancy Coben admits she’s been doing for decades.

“Oh yes,” she said. “Always.”

After KCRA 3 told her the UC Davis study showed she was actually spreading bacteria by washing the chicken, Coben said, “All right, I’ll take you up on that. I won’t do it anymore.”

Read the whole story

Fresh produce available for

Nevada’s seniors

Lake Tahoe Markets honors the Nevada Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program.

The SFMNP provides low-income seniors with coupons that can be exchanged for eligible foods at participating Nevada farmers markets. The purpose of this program is to increase the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, herbs and honey and to supplement the nutritional needs of Nevada seniors.

To qualify, a Nevada resident at least 60 years old must meet specific income guidelines and sign up at a local distributing agency site. To find a location, call 775. 353.3758.

SFMNP Coupons will be accepted at all Lake Tahoe Markets, including at Lampe Park in Gardnerville on Wednesdays, Lakeside Inn & Casino in Stateline on Wednesdays, the market at Tunnel Creek in Incline Village on Thursdays and the one at Tahoe Biltmore in Crystal Bay on Fridays.

Regional restaurateur wins on Food Network



Mark Estee, left, competes in “Guy’s Grocery Games”. Photo/Provided

Mark Estee, owner of Burger Me in Truckee and Campo in Reno, won “Guy’s Grocery Games” on the Food Network, bringing home $10,500 for three nonprofit organizations.

Estee will split winnings equally between Northern Nevada Food Bank, Green House Project and Urban Roots.

The show titled “Marshmallow Madness” aired June 22. Three rounds of challenges included a Red Light Special where chefs incorporated marshmallows into their hearty lunch, Guys Grocery List where chefs created a taco night, and a last round where the final two chefs created a family favorite out of One Ingredient Per Aisle.

This is the second time in four years Estee has appeared on a Guy Fieri show, both of which aired on Food Network. Estee and Fieri first met when Estee’s Burge M! was featured on “Diners Drive-In’s and Dives”. Later, Fieri ranked the Italian Stallion burger among the top 10 in the country.

Northstar hosting beer and bluegrass fest

The eighth annual Beerfest & Bluegrass Festival is July 5 at Northstar, with the third annual Brew Master’s Dinner on July 4.

The dinner is from 6-8:30pm at Tavern 6330’ in Northstar Village. It includes a five-course dinner of farm-fresh dishes

pairinged with craft beer. Tickets are $75 day-of, or $65 in advance.

The festival begins at 3pm that Saturday in the village, with more than 25 breweries participating. Each brewery will offer craft seasonal and specialty ales, lagers, stouts and porters. Barbecue will be available and bluegrass will be playing.

Tickets are $38 day-of, and $30 in advance. Each ticket includes a commemorative beer tasting glass and $1 of every ticket is donated to the Truckee Trails Foundation.

Hagar restaurant to reopen in Roseville

By Richard Chang, Sacramento Bee

Roseville's Sammy Hagar-themed restaurant is set to reopen in the fall after the legendary rock star's two sons agreed to take over operations.

Aaron Hagar, a resident of South Lake Tahoe, has worked for nearly nine years in various positions at Cabo Wabo Cantina of Harveys Lake Tahoe. Cabo Wabo is a chain founded by Sammy Hagar but licensed to other corporations.

"I started as a runner and moved up to middle management," said Hagar, who met with business partners and local officials in Roseville last week.

Sammy Hagar, 66, is expected to take a hands-on approach to managing the restaurant and will perform there on occasion

The popular downtown eatery closed in November after then-owner Steve Pease unexpectedly disappeared and was later found dead.

Read the whole story

Little sun, small space no problem for gardener



Toni Sopocko closes the bin to her vegetable garden. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Publisher's note: ***This is one in a random series of stories about gardening in Lake Tahoe.***

By Kathryn Reed

Growing vegetables doesn’t require a large plot or a ton of hours each day. Just ask Toni Sopocko.

Her husband, Steve, built her two structures that sit in the sunniest spot of their Tahoe Mountain backyard.

To keep the rodents out – which have been more of a problem since the 2007 Angora Fire – mesh was first put on the ground. Then Steve Sopocko used scrap wood from projects – mostly old decks he tore up – as the frame for the two gardening boxes. Chicken wire covers the four sides and top. Even though it’s enclosed, voles can squeeze through the wire.



Enclosed veggie boxes help keep out critters.

Toni Sopocko got into gardening somewhat on a whim about three years ago.

“It sounded like fun and I wanted to grow stuff,” she said.

Sometimes not all of the lettuce makes it inside for the daily salad. It’s sweet right out of the ground. Tender to the touch, it almost seems like a delicate flower that should be treated with kid gloves, even revered. It would be easy to sit and munch the morning away.

“I pinch off the leaves as I need them,” Sopocko said of the lettuce. She said the key is to snip off the flowers so the lettuce will keep growing.

Nothing goes to waste. Eventually some of it will end up in their mulch pile.

Good soil is a common thread among those who garden successfully in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Sopockos have a connection where they can get horse manure in the fall that is added to the soil.

Still, Sopocko says their gardening is more trial and error than science.

She tried peppers, but they didn’t work. Not enough intense sun where she lives on the South Shore. Zucchini has done well in the past, but it’s not something they both enjoy.

Sopocko admits the warm spring led her to start planting sooner than she should have. The lettuce is from seeds that she put in rows. When some didn’t come up she added more seeds.

Next to the lettuce are carrots. The green stalks are well above ground, but the edible orange part is in the formative stage. She pulls one out to show just how tiny it is at this stage. If the recognizable stalk weren’t there, it would be hard to know that was a carrot at the other end.

It will be a little while before they have fresh carrots in their salads. This is much to the chagrin of her dogs who like carrots right out of the ground.



Carrots and lettuce will be harvested at different times.

The snow peas will be ready in the next couple weeks. They are creeping up the devices she has stuck in the dirt so they don’t just lay on the ground. Stir fries are a common use for these edibles. She also has English peas in this box. But like the other produce, sometimes it never makes it into the kitchen.

In a nearby planter blueberries are being grown. This is a first for Sopocko. She figured she could risk the $1.99 it cost her to see if it would bear fruit.

Sopocko chooses what to plant based in part on what will grow in the limited sunlight her beds get each day, veggies without potassium for health reasons, and things she knows will be successful in Tahoe’s climate.

In the fall she plans to plant garlic that will then be ready in the spring.

To make things easy she has a timer on a hose that sits between the two veggie boxes. Each day it comes on for 10 minutes.

“Every other day or so I pull weeds. I don’t do anything other than pick (veggies) now,” Sopocko told *Lake Tahoe News*. “It’s not a lot of work when it’s this small.”

Even these two boxes, which aren’t more than 4 feet by 2 feet, produce enough lettuce that the Sopockos are giving it away because it’s too much for the two of them.

Squaw hosting farm to table dinners in August

Squaw Valley is offering a new series of farm to table dinners this summer.

Dinners will be hosted at Cushing Pond, located just next to KT-22, as well as in the resort's newly landscaped garden setting at Olympic Valley Lodge. Thehe family-style dinners will take place at 6pm on Aug. 2, Aug. 16 and Aug. 30.

Cost is $35 per person. Each upscale picnic dinner will feature locally and sustainably sourced food prepared with a creative twist. Specially paired beers and wines will be available for purchase, along with a large selection of non-alcoholic beverages.

Reservations are required; call chef Tiffany Swan at 530.452.6081 or email farmtotable@squaw.com.

Free produce for families in need

The Food Bank of El Dorado County will be in South Lake Tahoe on June 25 from 10-11am to host a free farmers market.

It will be at the American Legion Hall on Highway 50.

People struggling to make ends meet and live in the South Lake

Tahoe area may receive the free fresh produce. The Food Bank will provide one allocation per household.

The Food Bank's hunger study surveys, which are still being submitted and tabulated, show an increasing need and desire for more fresh produce in South Lake Tahoe.

For more information on how to can give or get help, call 530.621.9950 or email info@foodbankedc.org.

K's Kitchen: The original bloody Mary



A round of bloody Marys for the Reed clan in New York.

By Kathryn Reed

NEW YORK – Bloody Marys have long been part of my travel plans. It all started when my sister, Pam, and I missed a flight years ago when we were off to see our grandparents. We spent our "extra" time drinking a bloody Mary.

From that point on we found ourselves at an airport bar before each flight – coming and going. A bloody Mary is always the drink of choice.

Then we got our significant others involved in this ritual.

And now our mom is part of the tradition. Sometimes she gets hers without vodka, but that doesn’t matter.

So, when it came to planning our trip to New York, mom came across the ultimate in bloody Mary destinations – The King Cole Bar and Salon inside the St. Regis Hotel. It is the birthplace of the bloody Mary.

Many in our group of 12 who were in the Big Apple earlier this month for an early 80th birthday celebration for mom had a bloody Mary for lunch.

We had choices – Red Snapper, Bloody Smoke, Harry’s Texas Bloody Mary, Agave Maria and The Mary Terranean. Scotch, gin and tequila were in some of the concoctions instead of the traditional vodka.

Here is the history of the drink provided by the bar: “With the end of Prohibition in 1933, Fernand Petiot arrived from Harry’s New York Bar in Paris to preside over the St. Regis Hotel’s new King Cole Bar. The name came from Maxfield Parrish’s 15 foot long King Cole mural, and the combination of Parrish and Petiot quickly made the King Cole one of the liveliest places in a lively town. It became the regular haunt for a fabled coterie of wild and colorful characters, and Petiot began to serve them the drink that he called the Red Snapper – soon to be known the world over as the Bloody Mary.”



Fernand Petiot’s Red Snapper (The Original Bloody Mary)

2 ounces tomato juice

2 ounces vodka

½ tsp Worcestershire sauce

1 pinch salt

1 pinch cayenne pepper

1 dash lemon juice

Shake well with ice and serve in a Delmonico glass.