

Delightful Food Ideas

Cooking With Fresh, Seasonal Produce

by James Parker

(NAPSA)—You can jazz up everyday meals by cooking with seasonal produce and considering these fresh answers to questions about keeping mealtime healthy and delicious:

1. What tastes best cooked on the grill? During warm months, vegetables like squash, peppers and eggplant are all in excellent supply and are great for outdoor grilling. Grilling peaches are a delicious dessert option. As weather cools back down, figs, bananas and pineapples taste great on the grill.

2. How can you make a typical salad sing anytime of year? A great salad, no matter the time of year, uses in-season ingredients. In the heat of summer, add berries, peaches or nectarines to your leaf-based salad. Cherry tomatoes, cucumbers and basil are all excellent in the summer and fall. Turn to apples, figs, pears, grapes and citrus to jazz up fall salads.

3. Which ingredients will add a burst of flavor and nutritional value to an ordinary vegetable side dish? Fresh herbs can really add flavor to any dish. For example, try chopped mint over melons, oregano in a sauté or parsley sprinkled on a salad. Nuts are nutritionally dense and add texture to any salad or side.

You may also care to try this recipe from the experts on taste at Whole Foods Market, in which the richness of smoky grilled vegetables is well complemented by the creaminess of goat cheese:

Grilled Veggie and Goat Cheese Pitas

Serves 4

4 large portobello mushrooms, stems removed and gills scraped out



Pick a pita pocket of goodness filled with seasonal vegetables.

- 2 zucchini, sliced lengthwise**
- 1 red onion, cut into 4 even slices**
- 1 red bell pepper, thickly sliced**
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar**
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil**
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt**
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**
- 4 ounces Humboldt Fog or other fresh goat cheese**
- 4 whole wheat pitas or thin sandwich buns, halved**

Preheat a grill to medium heat. Brush mushrooms, zucchini, onion and bell pepper with vinegar and oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill vegetables, covered, 8 to 12 minutes or until tender, turning once halfway through cooking (mushrooms and onions will take longest). Set vegetables aside to let cool, then roughly chop. Spread cheese in pitas and stuff with vegetables.

For more fresh ideas, visit www.wholefoodsmarket.com.

• *Mr. Parker is the global produce buyer for Whole Foods Market.*