

Cooking Seasonally For The Most Sumptuous Flavor

(NAPSA)—There's a growing interest in the idea of cooking seasonally, making the most of delicious fruits and vegetables when these foods are freshest and most flavorful.

While you can get most foods throughout the year, paying attention to the growing season can pay a flavor dividend.

For example, although you can find asparagus in your grocery store year-round, fresh asparagus is really in season in the U.S. from April to June. In the winter, it comes from places such as Chile. That's why restaurants such as Noodles & Company choose spring to introduce new asparagus dishes. The restaurant created Asparagus & Lemon Linguine, using in-season, locally grown asparagus.

Rather than the caloric, butter-laden pasta dishes of the past, this dish features fresh asparagus, snap peas, lemon juice, basil, feta cheese, sautéed red onions and mushrooms, plus hard amber durum wheat linguine from the restaurant's Dakota Growers cooperative.

The dish is rich in lemony flavor, with the fresh-cut basil and snap peas adding a nicely complex flavor and crunchiness. The combination of flavors is very Mediterranean and the ingredients are light so you don't feel too full after eating it.

Sample this dish at the restaurant, where you can add or swap 14 different fresh vegetables, or try it at home.

Asparagus & Lemon Linguine (with shrimp)

(Serves 4-6)

- 1 lb linguine (whole wheat or regular)
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lb fresh asparagus
- 2 cloves fresh garlic, chopped
- ½ red onion, sliced
- 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup snap peas
- 1-2 Tbsp. fresh basil, thinly sliced
- 1-2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lb shrimp (peeled & deveined)
- Crushed red chilies (to taste)



The vivid green colors of this dish reinforce its fresh appeal with feta and red onions thrown in for some additional color.

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- 1 Tbsp. white wine (optional)
 - ¼ cup chicken or vegetable stock
 - 1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
 - Kosher salt (to taste)
 - ½ fresh lemon, juiced
 - 4 Tbsp. crumbled feta cheese

Cook pasta according to package directions to al dente. Rinse in cold water; drain, then toss with 1 Tbsp. oil and set aside.

Cut bottom ⅓ of asparagus stalks off and discard. Blanch in boiling water for 1 minute, then place in cold water to stop the cooking. Drain, then cut in half and set aside.

Put garlic, onion, mushrooms, snap peas and basil in separate small bowls; set aside.

Heat 14-inch sauté pan over medium heat. Allow the pan to get hot before adding 1-2 Tbsp. oil. Add garlic, red onion and mushrooms; cook until slightly browned. Add shrimp and chilies. Add the noodles and stir, combining ingredients. Deglaze the pan with the white wine, then add the stock. When the noodles begin to sizzle a bit, add the balsamic vinegar, snap peas, asparagus, basil and salt; stir. The entire process will only take a few minutes. Once removed from the heat, stir in lemon juice. Place onto platter and top with feta.

For more information, visit www.noodles.com.