



edible
COMMUNITIES

Seasonal Recipes

SPRING

Spring Recipes

2019

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to Edible Communities!

We're all about fresh seasonal produce, farmers markets, and creating sustainable food systems. We dream about our food and the people who grow it. Making it as easy as possible for others to do the same is what gets us out of bed.

Now that spring has sprung, we have some simple recipes that make the most of fleeting spring delights such as asparagus and strawberries. We also want to remind you that seasonality applies to ingredients beyond fruits and vegetables, so you'll find quick recipes for salmon and lamb, too.

—Molly Watson
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ABOUT EDIBLE COMMUNITIES: Edible Communities is a network of more than 80 individually owned publications across the US and Canada united by a single mission: to connect people to their local food, how it's produced, and who makes it. We believe that locally sourced, sustainably produced food matters to our health, to our communities, and to the future of the world around us.

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STRAWBERRY SANGRIA

This lighter, fresher, pinker take on sangria is a great match for spring and summer and strawberries.

Traditional sangria would have brandy and/or more vodka in the mix, for a super boozy effect; the whole mix is lightened up here so the floral edge of the rosé can meld with the aroma of the strawberries in an intoxicating pink explosion. Gin tends to bring out strong feelings—people love it or hate it. If you love it, that distinctive aroma adds a pleasing layer to this mix; if you hate it, just skip it and use vodka instead. You can even skip that extra dose of alcohol entirely if you want.

Serves: 6
Prep time: 10 minutes
Sitting time: 1 hour (optional)

INGREDIENTS

1 pint strawberries
3 limes
2 - 3 tablespoons sugar
1/2 cup dry gin or vodka
1 bottle (750-ml) dry rosé wine
6-8 leaves fresh mint (about 2 sprigs)
Seltzer/sparkling water (optional)

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STRAWBERRY SANGRIA

continued

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Hull and slice the strawberries. You can simply cut off their green tops, but cutting those tops and the white flesh just underneath yields a prettier, heart-shaped slice. To hull the berries, insert the tip of a paring knife in and under the green stem and turn the strawberry so the knife cuts out the hull, or calyx.
2. Put the sliced strawberries, the juice of 2 of the limes, the sugar, and the gin or vodka in a pitcher. Stir to dissolve the sugar.
3. Let the mixture sit about 1 hour if you can. This sitting time lets the alcohol pull flavor out of the strawberries and will give the final sangria a deeper, more fully strawberry taste.
4. Pour in the wine.
5. Scrub the final lime clean, thinly slice it, and add it to the pitcher.
6. Roll the mint leaves in your hands to release their fragrance. Stack them and use a sharp knife to cut them into thin strips; add the mint to the pitcher.
7. Pour into glasses full of ice. For a lighter drink, use half sangria and half seltzer.

VARIATIONS:

Make it razzzy. Use raspberries in place of some or all of the strawberries—no need to slice them, just dump them in the pitcher.

Lemon-ade. Use lemons in place of the limes. Note that you may need to up the amount of sugar if you do.

Thyme to change. Use a sprig of thyme in place of (or in addition to) the mint for a savory, unexpected edge.

No way rosé. No rosé around? A dry white wine will be tasty too.



BEET YOGURT DIP

Roasted beets, garlic, and just enough yogurt to hold it all together create a hummus-like dip or spread full of color and flavor.

This dip is also a spread is also a salad. The roasted beets don't just give a ton of flavor, they add a crazy amount of intense magenta color. Feel free to use Chioggia or golden beets, if you like—Chioggia (striped) beets will create a dish that's a much softer pink, while golden beets will yield a dip that matches goldenrod paper at the office.

Serves: 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes (for roasting the beets)

INGREDIENTS

4 medium beets

2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil, divided

1 clove garlic

1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1 cup Greek or sheep-milk yogurt

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste (optional)

2 sprigs fresh dill (optional)

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BEET YOGURT DIP

continued

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat an oven to 375°F. Trim the beets and put them in a roasting pan or on a large piece of aluminum foil. Toss the beets with the oil and cover them with foil (making a packet if you're just roasting them in foil and setting it on a baking sheet).
2. Cook until the beets are tender when pierced with a fork, about 30 minutes (beets that are larger or older can take longer, even up to 1 hour). Uncover and let the beets sit at room temperature until they're cool enough to handle, but still warm, about 20 minutes.
3. While the beets cool, peel and mince the garlic. In a medium bowl, mash the minced garlic with the salt. Stir in the lemon juice. Add the yogurt and stir to combine thoroughly.
4. Peel the beets: their skins should slip off easily; if you want to avoid stained hands, be sure to wear a pair of latex or rubber gloves.
5. In a large bowl, shred the peeled beets on the large holes of a grater (feel free to do this in a food processor with a grating disc if that level of clean-up doesn't terrify you).
6. Stir the grated beets into the yogurt mixture. Taste and adjust the amount of salt and/or lemon juice to taste. Season with black pepper, if you like. If you're using dill, mince the dill leaves and stir them into the beets.
7. Serve at room temperature. You can store this dish, covered and chilled, up to 1 day. It will keep longer but know that since it contains raw garlic, its flavor will intensify.

It's obvious to serve this with toasted pita triangles, crackers, or a spread of fresh vegetables to dip. You can also serve this more as tzatziki, dolloped alongside roasted lamb or simple chicken.



SPRING VEGETABLE FRITTO MISTO

This “mixed fry” of spring vegetables—*asparagus, morels, snap peas, and more*—is wonderfully fun and tasty.

Don’t feel confined to the list of vegetables below—use what’s fresh and what you like. Know that the alcohol in the wine cooks off during frying; it’s used here both for flavor and to keep the batter light (alcohol isn’t water and more of it cooks off faster), but if you don’t want to use it, water will work just fine. If you want to make this more of a meal, consider adding shrimp, scallops, or chunks of fish to the mix.

Serves 4-6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sitting time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 cup all-purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

1 cup dry white wine

1/2 cup seltzer water or soda water

2 green onions

1 cup snap peas

2 ounces morel mushrooms or brown cremini mushrooms

6 baby turnips with greens

1/2 pound asparagus spears

1 lemon

4 cups oil for frying

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SPRING VEGETABLE FRITTO MISTO

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large bowl, whisk together 1 cup of the flour, 1/2 teaspoon of the salt, and the wine. Make sure the mixture is smooth and set it aside for 30 minutes.
2. While the mixture sits, prepare the vegetables. Trim and cut the green onions into 2 1/2-inch lengths. Trim and destem the snap peas, if you like. Rinse any grit from the morels and pat them dry. Clean and trim the baby turnips, leaving the greens attached, if you like. Snap the asparagus and discard the woody ends. Thinly slice half the lemon, reserve the remaining half of lemon to spritz the fritto misto when you serve it.
3. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. If you have a thermometer, use it to know when the oil hits 350°F - 375°F and keep it there. If you don't have a thermometer, know that the oil is the correct temperature when a piece of battered vegetable sizzles immediately (if it doesn't sizzle immediately, the oil is too cold) when added to the oil, but doesn't sputter or throw off oil (which would mean the oil is too hot).
4. Preheat an oven to 220°F. Set a cooling rack in a baking pan. As the oil heats, stir the seltzer water into the batter and coat the vegetables. Work with 1 type of vegetable at a time. Put the vegetables in the batter, move them around to coat them, and lift them out, letting excess batter drip off. Put each piece in the hot oil and fry, stirring or turning for even cooking, until golden and tender. Only put as many vegetables as fit in a single layer. Time will vary depending on what type and size, but 2-3 minutes is the general range.
5. Lift the vegetables out of the oil using a slotted spoon, birds nest, or tongs, and transfer to the cooling rack set over a baking sheet to drain. Keep in the warm oven as you cook the remaining vegetables.
6. As soon as all the batches are done, transfer all vegetables onto a serving platter and serve hot with a spritz of lemon. Season to taste with additional salt, if you like.

While a simple spritz of lemon is all this dish really needs at the end, if you insist on a dipping sauce, both ponzu or aioli are good choices.



RADISH SNAP PEA SALAD

There's lots of crunch and lots of flavor in a simple, colorful spring salad of radishes and snap peas with a refreshing buttermilk dressing.

Crisp. Crunch. Snap. There's an almost overwhelming amount of fresh, raw, vegetable texture in a bite of this salad. One tip to get the most out of it: don't skimp on the chopping. The balance of smaller pieces working together is what makes this salad shine.

Serves: 4-6

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 0 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 bunch (about 8 medium-large) radishes

1/2 pound snap peas

1 clove garlic

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

1/3 cup buttermilk

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

3 green onions

4 sprigs fresh dill, plus more for garnish

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RADISH SNAP PEA SALAD

continued

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Trim and rinse the radishes; de-string (if necessary) and rinse the snap peas. Pat dry and set aside while you make the dressing.
2. Peel and mince the garlic; put the garlic in a measuring cup or small bowl. Stir in the lemon juice, salt, pepper, buttermilk, and olive oil.
3. Trim the green onions; cut them in half lengthwise and mince them; add them to the dressing.
4. Mince the dill and stir it into the dressing. Set the dressing aside so the flavors can blend while you chop the vegetables.
5. Working with 1 radish at a time, cut it in half lengthwise, cut each half into 3-4 slices, turn them and stack them to cut the slices into 3-4 sticks. Repeat with the remaining radishes.
6. Trim the snap peas and cut the pods into 1/4- to 1/2-inch pieces.
7. Put the vegetables in a salad bowl, drizzle on the dressing to taste, toss to coat the vegetables evenly, and serve. Garnish with more dill, if you like.

Don't feel like chopping? Serve whole radishes and snap peas with the dressing as a dip.



PEARL COUSCOUS SWEET PEA SALAD

Sweet green peas, pearl couscous, and lots of flavorful herbs make a crowd-pleasing spring salad.

Lots of little orbs bounce around in this salad that gets a triple dose of “lemon” from zest, juice, and lemongrass. The feta is optional, but something about the creamy saltiness of it brings everything together in a magical way.

Serves: 6-8

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided

2 cups pearl couscous

2 1/2 cups chicken broth or salted water

5-inch piece of lemongrass

2 shallots

1 lemon

1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste

1 1/2 cups shelled green peas

1 bunch (6 sprigs) dill

6 sprigs fresh mint

6 ounces feta (optional)

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PEARL COUSCOUS SWEET PEA SALAD

continued

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium saucepan, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil over medium-high heat. Add the couscous and cook, stirring, until it starts to toast with a few of the pieces starting to brown, about 3 minutes. Add the broth or salted water, bring to a boil, cover, and reduce the heat to low. Cook, undisturbed, until the liquid is mostly absorbed, 10 minutes. Remove from the heat, uncover, and fluff the couscous and break it up as you transfer it to a large bowl or sheet pan to cool until no longer steaming, about 5 minutes.
2. While the couscous cooks, make the dressing. Trim and mince the lemongrass. This is a tough, fibrous plant, so you really need to mince it as finely as possible to get the flavor of it without any tough pieces in the final salad. Put it in a salad bowl.
3. Peel the shallots, halve and thinly slice them; add them to the bowl.
4. Zest the lemon into the bowl, using a microplane if you have one or a fine grater or zester. Be sure to only grate off the bright yellow zest and leave the bitter white pith behind. Cut the lemon in half and juice it into the bowl.
5. Add the salt and pepper, then stir in the remaining 3 tablespoons of olive oil.
6. When the couscous is cooled off, add it to the dressing and toss to coat.
7. You can add the peas raw, or quickly cook them in boiling salted water for 2 minutes, drain, and cool off as quickly as possible by rinsing under cold water. Pat dry and add to the salad.
8. Finely chop the dill and mint leaves and add them to the salad (you can reserve a few leaves to garnish the salad with, if you like).
9. Serve slightly warm or at room temperature, with crumbled feta on top, if you like.

In the unlikely event you have leftovers, know that all the green will fade a bit after a night or two covered and chilled, but the flavors will blend beautifully.



NETTLE SOUP WITH HORSERADISH CREAM

Deep green, earthy nettles get a kick from a dollop of horseradish-infused crème fraîche.

This soup is a deep taste of spring in a bowl—full of green and earthiness and fresh bright days ahead. Nettles are often considered weeds, but those who are smart enough to harvest them know that they bring a deeply earthy yet grassy flavor to spring tables. You might find them in your garden or yard (only harvest nettles from areas that aren't sprayed with pesticides or other potentially harmful chemicals), at specialty markets, or in tangled piles at farmers markets.

Serves: 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1/2 -3/4 pound stinging nettles

2 spring onions or 1 medium yellow onion

2 tablespoons butter

1 teaspoon salt

1 pound russet or Yukon gold potatoes

6 cups chicken broth

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1/4 teaspoons freshly grated nutmeg

1/2 cup crème fraîche or sour cream

1 tablespoon freshly grated or jarred horseradish

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NETTLE SOUP WITH HORSERADISH CREAM

continued

INSTRUCTIONS

1. With your hands covered with rubber gloves or plastic bags, rinse the nettles clean in cool running water. Nettles can be quite gritty, so make sure they are fully and totally clean.
2. Peel and roughly chop the onion and potatoes.
3. In a large pot over medium-high heat, melt the butter. Add the onion and the salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is soft, about 3 minutes.
4. When the onions are soft, add the potatoes and the broth. Simmer until the potatoes are tender to the bite, 10 to 15 minutes.
5. Add the cleaned nettles and cook until they're tender, about more 10 minutes. Stir in the pepper and nutmeg.
6. While the potatoes and/or nettles cook, in a small bowl, stir the crème fraîche and horseradish together. Set aside.
7. Use an immersion blender to thoroughly purée the soup or whirl the soup in a blender (in batches, if necessary). For a silky smooth texture, run that purée through a food mill (extra work and totally optional!). Adjust the salt and pepper to taste.
8. Serve hot, with the horseradish cream on the side for diners to add as they like.

Nettles are often called stinging nettles for a reason: they sting. Wear gloves (or plastic bags) on your hands when handling them when they're raw—once they're cooked, all the sting is gone.



MUSTARD SEED RADISHES

When you have fresh radishes with vibrant greens, give them a turn in a hot pan for a fun way to serve these spring favorites.

Radishes are part of the mustard family, so cooking them with some popped mustard seeds doubles-down on the hot flavor they can both have even as cooking them tempers that “hotness.” This recipe works with any small radishes, but it’s best when you have fresh, vibrant spring radishes with gorgeous, healthy greens that are also worthy of being cooked and served.

Serves: 2-3

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 bunch radishes (about 8)

2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil

1/2 teaspoons brown mustard seeds

Flaked sea salt to taste

Fresh cilantro for garnish (optional)

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MUSTARD SEED RADISHES

continued

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Clean clean clean the whole radishes, trimming off and discarding any yellowed or wilted leaves, as well as any unruly root ends (they look cool, but will remain tough even when cooked). Really clean the radishes. Really. Put the radishes, greens and all, in a large bowl of cool water. Swish them around to loosen any dirt and grit. Lift the radishes out of the water (don't pour them out and dump all that dirt back on them!); repeat until the water in the bowl is clear.
2. Cut the radishes in half or quarters lengthwise, keeping a stem or two of leaves attached to as many radishes sections as possible.
3. Heat a large wide pot or wok over high heat, add the oil and swirl to coat the pan. Add the mustard seeds, cover, and let sizzle until they pop, about 1 minute.
4. Add the radishes and cook, stirring frequently, until the greens wilt and the radishes get just a bit tender, about 8 minutes.
5. Transfer the radishes to a serving platter and sprinkle with flaked sea salt to taste. Serve hot or warm.

If you happen to get a bunch of radishes with wilted or otherwise unappetizing greens, trim them off and cook the radishes all on their own.



ROAST ASPARAGUS WITH...

There is no easier way to cook asparagus than to roast it—you're just putting it in the oven and letting it do its thing.

Grilling is a close second, but you need to turn it and watch the flame, so roasting is, no question, easier. Roasting also tames the grassier herbal flavor of asparagus and brings out a deeper, earthier, more savory edge.

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 bunch (about 1 pound) asparagus

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1/2 teaspoon salt

Lemon wedges or other optional toppings

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat an oven to 400°F. While the oven heats, prepare the asparagus: you can either break off the tough ends where they naturally snap by grabbing both ends of an asparagus spear and bending it until it breaks; or, for a more elegant presentation, trim off about 1/2 inch from the end of each spear and use a vegetable peeler to peel about halfway up the spear.
2. Arrange the asparagus spears in a single layer on a baking sheet or in a roasting pan. Whatever vessel you choose, make sure the asparagus isn't crowded so there's plenty of room for the hot air to circulate and brown the asparagus.

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ROAST ASPARAGUS WITH...

INSTRUCTIONS *continued*

3. Drizzle the asparagus with the oil, toss to coat it, and spread the asparagus back into a single layer. Sprinkle with the salt and bake until the asparagus is tender and starting to brown on its tips, about 15 minutes. Serve hot, warm, or at room temperature with a spritz of lemon juice or any of the other optional toppings.

Optional toppings:

- Lemon. Grate some lemon zest over the asparagus, cut the lemon into wedges to spritz with fresh lemon juice
- Butter & Herbs. Top with a pat or two of butter and scatter on a handful of chopped fresh herbs (parsley, mint, tarragon, and dill are all good choices)
- Aioli. Whisk or whirl in a blender 1 egg yolk, 2 cloves garlic (minced), and 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard; slowly drip in 3/4 cup extra virgin olive oil, as it emulsifies with the egg a thick mayonnaise will form; stir in 2 teaspoon lemon juice; add salt to taste
- Rouille. Add 1/2 teaspoon cayenne along with the mustard to the aioli
- Hard Egg. Put 1 to 2 eggs in a pan of boiling water, cook for 9 minutes, cool with cold water, peel, and finely grate over the asparagus
- Soft Egg. Put 1 egg per person in a pan of boiling water, cook for 6 minutes, cool with cold water, peel, put 1 egg on each serving of asparagus, sprinkling with salt to taste (a sprinkle of Aleppo pepper can be good too!)
- Green Garlic. Finely chop 1/2 pound green garlic, in a frying pan over medium-high heat, cook the green garlic with 1 tablespoon olive oil until tender, about 5 minutes; in a blender or food processor, whirl the softened green garlic, 1/4 cup each pine nuts, extra-virgin olive oil, and grated pecorino cheese to form a paste; add salt to taste before spooning over the asparagus.



SPRING HERB TORTILLA

Spring herbs such as dill and mint work with leeks or spring onions and a bit of potato in this a lighter take on a classic Spanish tortilla.

First things first, don't worry about the insane amount of olive oil called for in this recipe—most of it gets drained off after you cook the potatoes. Feel free to strain it and save it in the fridge to use the next time you cook potatoes.

Serves: 6 to 8

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS

2 small leeks or spring onions

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil, divided

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 Yukon gold potatoes

2 cloves garlic

1 cup leaves of spring herbs of your choice (mint, dill, flat-leaf parsley, cilantro)

8 eggs

Nonstick cooking spray oil

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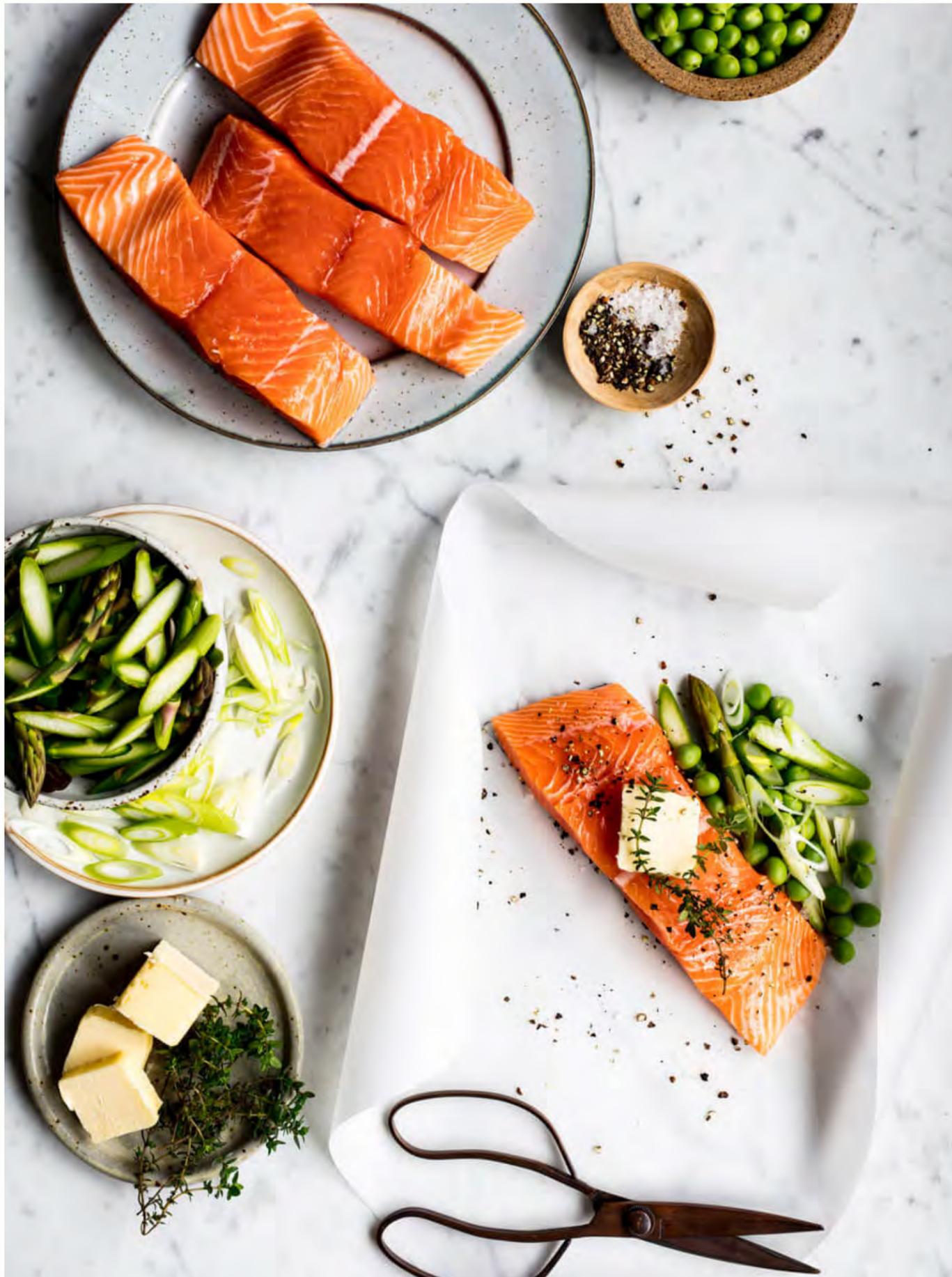
SPRING HERB TORTILLA

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INSTRUCTIONS

1. Trim the leeks or spring onions. Cut them in half lengthwise and thinly slice them—including the darker green tops. If you encounter any dirt or grit in the process, clean them: put the slices in a large bowl, cover them with cool water, swish around to clean, and lift the slices out of the water (don't dump the dirty water back on them!).
2. In a large pot over medium heat, add 2 tablespoons of the oil. Add the leeks or onions and the salt. Cook, stirring now and again, until the leeks or onions, including their green tops, are soft, about 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, peel and thinly slice the potatoes. When the leeks or onions are soft, add the potatoes and the remaining oil to the pot. Cook, stirring occasionally and making sure to scrape up any bits sticking to the bottom of the pan, until the potatoes are tender—they won't really cook more once in the egg mixture, so make sure they're soft!
4. Meanwhile, peel and mince the garlic. Mince the herbs.
5. When the potatoes are just soft, add the garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Remove from the heat and stir in the herbs. Set a colander or strainer over a large bowl and drain the potato mixture.
6. While the potatoes drain, whisk the eggs together in a large bowl. Add the potatoes mixture and stir to combine everything.
7. Heat a 12-inch frying pan over medium heat. Once it's hot, spray liberally with spray oil (or use a nonstick frying pan). Add the potato-egg mixture, using a spatula to arrange it evenly in the pan. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the eggs are set, about 20 minutes. The tortilla should not jiggle in the middle when you shake the pan. The result is more important than time here, so watch the tortilla over the clock.
8. If you want, you can pass the tortilla under a broiler to brown the top, which will become the bottom.
9. Turn out onto a large plate or serving platter. Serve—cut into slices—hot, warm, or at room temperature.

Do as the Spanish do and slice up any leftovers to tuck into sandwiches.



SALMON WITH SPRING VEGETABLES

This is the easiest, least messy, least stinky way to cook fish—and endlessly flexible as you switch out what you add to the packet.

If you've never tried cooking fish in a packet before, you need to give it a go. First, the fish stays really moist. Second, it contains that fishy smell than cooking fish can bring into a home. Third, it's crazy easy. Finally, it's crazy delicious. Skin-on filets will have more flavor; skinned filets will have less mess at the end—the choice is yours. Whichever you choose, be sure to remove any pin bones (you can feel them as you run your finger along the center of the filet—pull any out with small pliers or tweezers).

Serves: 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

4 filets (about 6 ounces each) salmon

Salt and pepper

4 tablespoons butter or extra virgin olive oil

4 - 8 spears asparagus

2 green onions

1/2 cup shelled green peas

1 sprig fresh thyme

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SALMON WITH SPRING VEGETABLES

continued

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat an oven to 400°F.
2. Prepare 4 sheets of parchment paper or aluminum foil—about 18-inch long each.
3. Set a piece of salmon on each piece of parchment—put it on one half of the sheet so you can eventually fold the other side over it to enclose the fish. Sprinkle each filet with salt and pepper and top with 1 tablespoon of butter or oil each.
4. Trim or snap off and discard the woody ends of the asparagus. Cut the spears on the bias into thin slices and scatter them over the salmon.
5. Trim the green onions, cut them thinly on the bias, and scatter evenly over the salmon. Scatter the peas over the salmon, too.
6. Remove the leaves from the thyme sprig and add a few to each packet.
7. Enclose each filet into a packet by folding the parchment paper over and twisting the edges together to form a sealed packet. Set the packets on the baking sheet(s) for easier handling. Bake until the salmon is cooked through, about 15 minutes for 1-inch thick filets.
8. Serve the packets for diners to open dramatically at the table, if you like.

Variations

- Earthy. Add a sliced morel or two to each packet.
- Bright. Grate a bit of ginger and add a sprig or two of cilantro over each filet.
- Salty-Umami. Coat each filet with about 1/2 teaspoon miso.
- Herbalicious. Toss a large pinch of chopped herbs, such as dill or mint, into each packet.



GREEN GARLIC LAMB CHOPS WITH MINT CHUTNEY

The gentle garlic nature of green garlic is the ideal complement to the richness of lamb chops—mint chutney keeps things fresh.

Spring lamb is seasonal because, well, spring is when true baby lambs were available. Lamb is, technically, under a year old, so we can get lamb year-round (imports from New Zealand and Australia, with opposite seasons from North America, help the matter), but if you pay attention, you'll notice lamb in the spring is more tender than other times of year. The chops here are treated simply with a bit of green garlic for more spring-y flavor.

Serves: 4

Prep time: 35 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

8 lamb chops

2 stalks green garlic

2 teaspoons salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

Mint Chutney

1 bunch (8-10 sprigs) fresh mint

1 bunch cilantro (or flat-leaf parsley if you don't like cilantro)

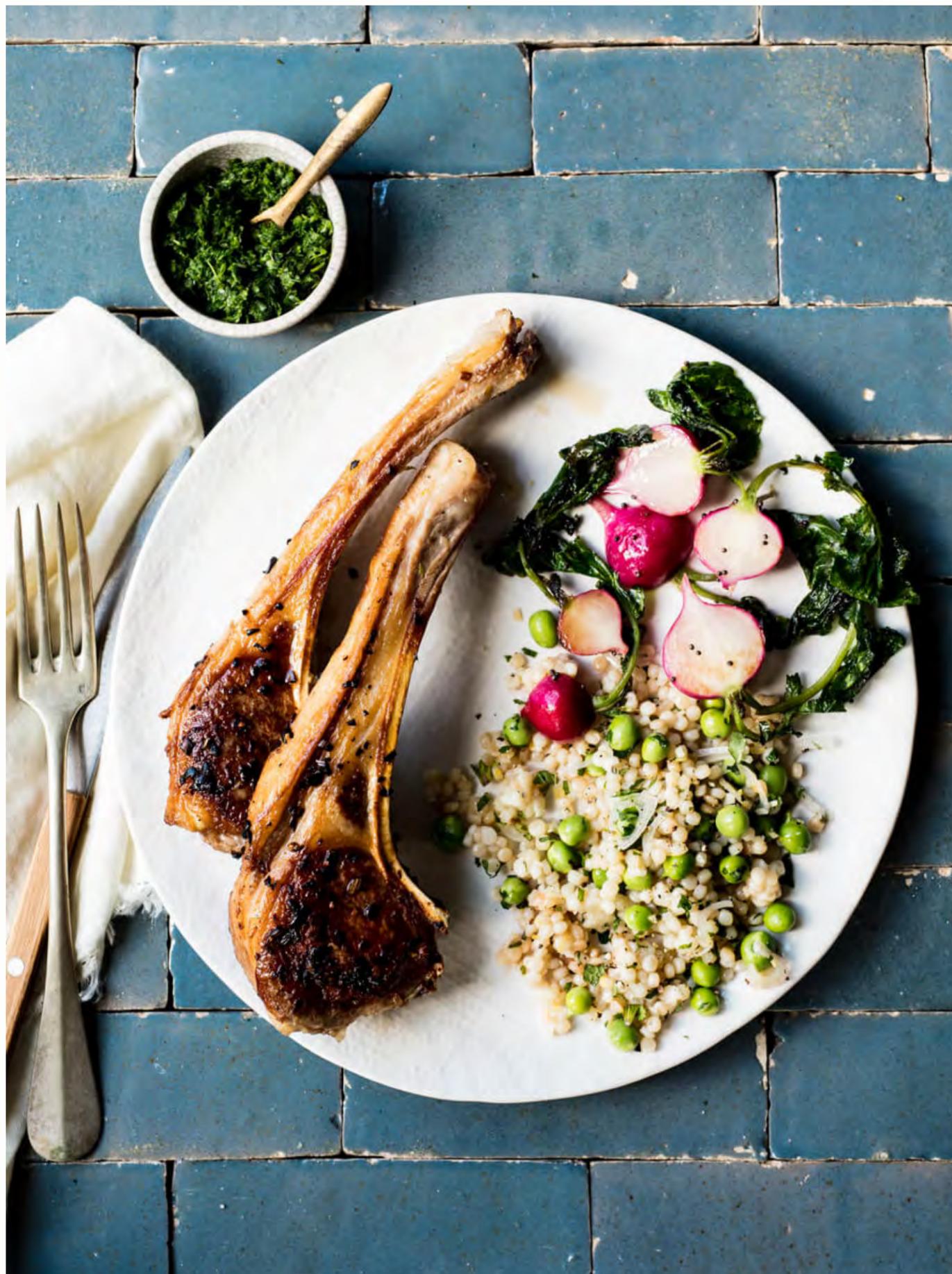
2 cloves garlic

1-2 hot green chiles

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons lemon or lime juice

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GREEN GARLIC LAMB CHOPS WITH MINT CHUTNEY

continued

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pat the chops dry and set aside.
2. Trim and mince—really chop it!—the green garlic. In a small bowl, combine the green garlic, salt, pepper, and 1 teaspoon of the olive oil. Slather the chops all over with the resulting paste and let sit for at least 30 minutes (or cover with plastic wrap and chill up to 4 hours; bring back to room temperature for 30 minutes before cooking).
3. While the lamb sits, make the chutney: Put the mint and cilantro (or parsley) leaves in a blender or food processor; peel and chop the garlic and add it to the herbs; stem, seed, and roughly chop the chile(s) and add them; add the salt and lemon juice; pulse all of the ingredients until they make a sauce. Add more salt or lemon juice to taste.
4. Heat a large frying pan over medium heat. Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil, swirl to coat the pan and add the lamb chops in a single layer. Let them cook, undisturbed, until browned, 3 to 4 minutes. Turn them over and cook until browned on the other side, 3 to 4 more minutes. (This timing will result in medium-rare to medium chops; cook less time for rare and more time for well.)
5. Serve the chops with the chutney for diners to add as they like.

No green garlic in your parts? No problem! Cook up the chops without it—the mint chutney adds plenty of flavor all on its own.



STRAWBERRY FOOL

Simple mashed strawberries and sweetened whipped cream make an irresistible dessert that's also beyond easy to make.

The name implies that one is a fool for strawberries. Fair enough. This is a classic English dessert of mashed sweetened strawberries folded into sweetened whipped cream. Make it for guests—they will never guess just how simple it is.

Serves: 8

Prep time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 pint strawberries

1/2 cup sugar, divided

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract or 2 tablespoons kirsch or berry liqueur

1 pint (2 cups) heavy whipping cream

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INSTRUCTIONS

1. First, you need to hull the strawberries. You may be tempted to just lop off the top, but the better way is to insert the tip of a paring knife at an angle under the green top, twisting the strawberry so the knife cuts a circle around and under the green, popping out the hull or calyx—the green leaves and the white part underneath. Slice the hulled strawberries
2. In a medium bowl, put about 2/3 of the hulled strawberries, 2 tablespoons the sugar, and the vanilla or liqueur. Mash it all together. This mixture gets folded into the whipped cream; you can keep it as chunky as you like or mash it into more of a puree for a smoother texture. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, whip the cream with the remaining sugar using a mixer or whisk until firm peaks form—when you pull the beaters or whisk out of the cream, you should be able to hold it upside-down and have the peak of cream hold its shape. With a spatula, fold in strawberry mixture. Divide the fool among 8 glasses or bowls and top with remaining strawberry slices. Serve immediately or cover and chill for up to 2 hours.

No need to be traditional—this technique works with any soft summer berry or fruit. Raspberry fool. Blueberry fool. Cherry fool. Peach fool. Go forth! Be a fool.



LAST THOUGHTS: TIPS FOR STORING STRAWBERRIES

What's in season when varies. On where you are. On late frosts, early heat waves, sudden storms. On all sorts of factors and variables. So while strawberries are either flooding markets where you are or you're still chomping at the bit for the locally grown ones to show up, make the most of them by storing them properly.

First and most importantly, don't wash strawberries until you're ready to eat them—they're like bright red sponges ready to soak up any liquid in their realm.

If you're planning on using them within a day, you can leave them on the counter or pop them in the fridge; for any longer storage, it's worth spreading them in a single layer on a paper towel-lined baking sheet and covering with another layer of paper towels—this both keeps them dry (and thus staves off mold) and makes sure they don't crush each other.