

ROASTED BABY LEEKS WITH THYME

INGREDIENTS:

4 or 5 baby leeks per person	boiling salted water
olive oil	red wine vinegar
chopped thyme leaves	garlic

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat your oven to 200°C/400°F/gas 6. I like to serve 4 or 5 baby leeks per person, depending on their size. Lightly trim both ends and peel back the first or second layer of leaves and discard. Drop the leeks in a pan of boiling salted water for 2 to 3 minutes to soften - this is called blanching. Drain them well (if there's too much water in them they won't roast properly) and toss in a bowl with a good glug of olive oil, a splash of red wine vinegar, the chopped thyme leaves and the garlic. Arrange the leeks in one layer in a baking tray or earthenware dish and roast in the preheated oven for about 10 minutes until golden and almost caramelized. Keep your eye on them - I've seen many chefs burn baby leeks when cooking them this way and it drives me mad!

Source: <http://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/vegetarian-recipes/roasted-baby-leeks-with-thyme#>

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UPCOMING EVENTS

(complete details at www.accokeek.org)

COLONIAL FOODWAYS

Saturday, July 18, 2009, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Rain or Shine, \$2/Person, Members Free

Join us as costumed interpreters demonstrate preparation of fashionable foods favored by the tobacco-growing gentry in Prince George's County, Maryland on the eve of the American Revolution.

NATURE NUTS

Tuesday, July 21, 2009, 11:00 a.m. to Noon
Rain or Shine, \$6 Non-Members, \$5 Members

This fun-filled hour of exploration at the Museum Garden is the perfect setting to learn about the wonders of nature. Designed for children ages 3-5. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

LADYBUG FLY AWAY!

Saturday, July 25, 2009, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Free, Event by the National Children's Museum

Families are invited to help scientists find out why native ladybug species are disappearing. Play a ladybug matching game, make your own ladybug craft to take home. Special performances by the Accokeek Foundation at 11:30 a.m., 1:30 and 2:30 p.m. **National Harbor.** Ladybug releases are at 11 a.m., noon, and 1 p.m. at the American Market.

For more information please call 301.283.2113, or email us accofound@accokeek.org.

FIELD NOTES

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Candy

Last fall Angela, Natesha and I planted a small bed of shallots. It was a pretty fall day and we got a little creative. We decided to experiment with our planting techniques: we tried two different microbial treatments, and planted seed shallots in different size groups. The goal of the latter trial was to make cultivation easier; we thought that perhaps the shallots would push each other aside to give themselves as much room as they needed, and we spaced the groups further apart to give us room to hoe. If you're after size, you might try planting them more like you would garlic, giving each individual seed shallot more space then laying mulch over them to keep weeds down. But I'll tell you that these are some of the sweetest shallots I've ever eaten. Sweet enough to pop in your mouth uncooked. Kind of like candy – just unwrap and eat.

Farm Update

The last couple of weeks have felt good. The ground dry enough to work consistently, we feel like farmers again, planting at will, cultivating in timely fashion, staying on top of insects, even laying drip irrigation. It's amazing what a little sunshine can do.

As a stand-alone, the CSA is an interesting business model. In one sense, it's great for a farmer: strong community ties, early season cash flow, insurance against season risk. Yet it's still a pressure cooker in the lean weeks. We are all much grateful for

THIS WEEK'S HARVEST

Baby Leeks

Basil

Beets

Carrots

Cukes

Garlic

Shallots

Tomatoes

the support you've given the crew this season – it's been a hard one to farm and we've been scrappy this season.

The wet spring is still catching up to us. Like a lot of growers in the area, we lost many of our early summer crops like squash, cucumbers, melons, and beans. We've had greens washed out, plantings get overcome by weed and pest. In some cases, we've come out all right: boxes are buoyed by tomatoes from the tunnel while those in the field are becoming full with hard green fruits. In other cases, not quite as well: the last week was the end of the tunnel cucumbers, and they had a week of overlap with those field cukes that made it through May. Those in the field, though, don't make up a full planting, and you may see them in your box one week and not the next until we're caught up. Beans and squash, too, are giving us fits; we lost two successions of beans and wait for the newest ones to grow. Same with greens, salad and cooking. Some crops have just gotten a late start, and we hope the fall is mild enough to see them through to maturity: these are winter squash and watermelons, especially. And, unfortunately, there will be no flowers except those growing as wildflowers in our insectary beds (which you are welcome to share with our beneficial insects).

On the other hand, we're harvesting and have got produce coming soon

to a box near you. Your onions are harvested and curing as we speak; you've gotten some of these already. Potatoes are starting to size up and we'll see the first new potatoes in the next week or two. There are peppers on our plants, and hot peppers, too. We hope to see more summer greens, and more consistently. And summer squash are catching up fast (it will be a few more weeks before we see their fruits). The odds and ends are sizing up, too: cape gooseberry, okra and eggplant most notably. And for further down the line, the sweet potatoes look well and good, more beets and carrots, and we've started sowing fall crops like those in the broccoli and cabbage family, celery, and leeks. Dare I say the fig trees are loaded – but you'll have to wait until late August.

A last note: on potato planting day in April, a professional photographer asked to visit the farm for an article he was working on. Ollivier spent a “day in the life”, following us through the day's work. Some of his pictures are on his website. If you're interested, take a moment to look at his work, he's an excellent photographer (dirty subjects aside). You can see them here <http://www.olliviergirard.com/>. For pictures of the farm go to “documentary” and then to “the accokeek foundation”.

Be great,
Mike

ROASTED CARROTS

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds small carrots (including greens; carrots about 5 inches long), tops trimmed to 1 inch and carrots peeled
2 tablespoons olive oil

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 500°F with rack in lower third.

Toss carrots with oil, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper and spread out in a large 4-sided sheet pan. Roast 20 minutes. Reduce oven to 325°F and roast, stirring occasionally, until carrots are browned and tender, about 25 minutes more.

Source: <http://www.epicurious.com>

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SLOW-ROASTED BALSAMIC TOMATOES WITH BABY LEEKS AND BASIL

INGREDIENTS:

plum tomatoes	garlic
basil	bay leaves
baby leeks	salt and pepper
balsamic vinegar	olive oil

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 170°C/325°F/gas 3. Score the tops of the tomatoes with a cross. Take an earthenware dish that the tomatoes will fit snugly into, and sprinkle the garlic and basil all over the bottom of it. Stand the tomatoes next to each other in the tray, on top of the garlic and basil, then push the bay leaves well into the scores in the tomatoes and season well. Lay the leeks on a board and sprinkle generously with salt and pepper. Using a rolling pin, press down on top of the leeks to really squeeze the seasoning into them. This will also loosen their texture. Weave the leeks in and around the tomatoes. Pour over the balsamic vinegar, drizzle over the olive oil, and bake in the preheated oven for an hour. Before serving, remove the bay leaves.

Source: <http://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/vegetarian-recipes/roasted-balsamic-tomatoes-with-leeks#>

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