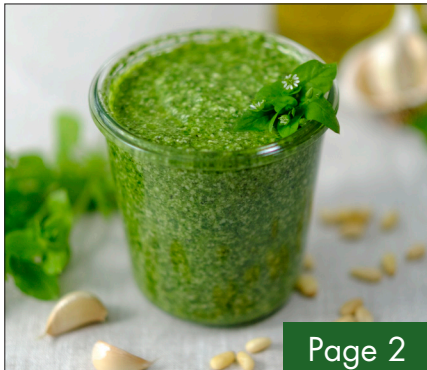


menu: WILD SPRING FEAST



Page 2

CHICKWEED
PESTO



Page 3

NETTLE AND
ASPARAGUS SOUP



Page 4

DANDELION
MAPLE SYRUP CAKE



Page 5

ROASTED ROOTS
BREW



Page 6

VIOLET
OXYMEL



CHICKWEED PESTO

Slather chickweed pesto on pasta, sandwiches, eggs, rice, vegetables, or anywhere else you want the verdant taste of spring. (For the Wild Spring Feast, we suggest tossing this pesto with boiled or roasted potatoes.) If you're making this recipe with young, tender chickweed, you can use the whole stem, leaf, and flower. Older plants may have unpleasantly fibrous stems, so you'll have to pluck the leaves from the stems.

Yield: About 1 cup

¼ cup pine nuts
3 cups loosely packed fresh chickweed
2 garlic cloves
Kosher salt
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Directions:

1. Toast the pine nuts in a dry skillet over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until lightly toasted, about 2 minutes. Remove the nuts from the pan and let them cool.
2. Combine the pine nuts, chickweed, garlic, and ¼ teaspoon salt in a food processor. Pulse until finely chopped.
3. With the processor running, slowly pour in the olive oil and process until the mixture is smooth.
4. Add the cheese and pulse until just combined. Taste and adjust the ingredients and seasonings as desired.
5. Serve immediately, refrigerate for up to 3 days, or freeze for up to 3 months. To store in the refrigerator, transfer the pesto to an airtight container and pour a thin layer of olive oil on top to prevent oxidation. To store in the freezer, transfer the pesto to a freezer-safe container, or freeze in ice cube trays and then transfer the cubes to a freezer-safe container.

Variations: For a nut-free version, ½ cup shelled hemp seeds can be substituted for the pine nuts. For a dairy-free version, you can omit the Parmesan cheese and salt and add 1 tablespoon of chopped preserved lemon peel.



NETTLE AND ASPARAGUS SOUP

Serve a taste of spring with this savory and delicious soup! Perfect for a Sunday brunch or a cozy evening meal, this recipe is a synergistic combination of two favorite seasonal plants.

Yield: 3 quarts

5 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1 medium onion, diced
(about ½ cup)
7 garlic cloves, minced (about 2
tablespoons)
1 tablespoon dried rosemary
2 teaspoons dried thyme
1 teaspoon freshly ground black
pepper
1½ teaspoons salt
5 cups broth (bone broth or
vegetable broth) or water
2 medium potatoes, diced
(about 1½ cups)
1 bunch asparagus (about 10
ounces), cut into 1-inch pieces
5 cups chopped fresh young
nettle leaves (use gloves
when chopping)
1 tablespoon lemon juice
Dash of cream (optional)

Directions:

1. Heat 3 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. When hot, add the onion and sauté until translucent.
2. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil and wait a few moments for it to heat. Add the garlic, rosemary, thyme, black pepper, and salt. Sauté for 1 minute or until aromatic.
3. Add the broth, cover, and bring to a boil.
4. Add the potatoes and simmer for 5 minutes.
5. Add the asparagus and nettle leaves and simmer for 5 to 7 minutes or until the asparagus pieces are fairly soft.
6. Once the asparagus are soft, turn off the heat. Add the lemon juice.
7. Using a blender (immersion or upright), blend the soup on high until thoroughly creamed. (If using an upright blender, be sure to allow steam to escape while blending to avoid a big, hot mess.)
8. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve in bowls with a dash of cream (optional).

Variation: A simple mushroom topping works wonderfully with this soup. You can make it while the soup is simmering. Heat 1 tablespoon butter in a small saucepan. Add 1 minced garlic clove and sauté for 30 seconds or until fragrant. Add a handful of minced mushrooms (morels, shiitakes, chanterelles, buttons, or whatever you like), and cook until tender. Top each serving of soup with a few spoonfuls.



DANDELION MAPLE SYRUP CAKE

Here's a delicious way to enjoy sunny dandelion blooms. Serve this cake as part of a brunch or as an after-dinner dessert. It pairs well with Roasted Roots Brew. To make this recipe, harvest about 2 cups of flower heads just before you begin to bake; otherwise, they may turn into puff balls on your counter. Process the flower heads by removing all the sepals and bracts, basically separating out the yellow flowers from all the green bits.

Yield: One 9-inch cake, about 8 medium servings

Cake

- ½ cup butter, softened
- ½ cup maple syrup
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¾ cup freshly picked dandelion flowers (sepals and bracts removed)
- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour (or gluten-free all-purpose flour)
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup raisins, chopped (optional)
- ¼ cup walnuts, chopped (optional)

Frosting

- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup butter, softened
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- ¼ cup freshly picked dandelion flowers (sepals and bracts removed)

For the cake:

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease a 9 x 2-inch glass pie plate.
2. Mix the butter, maple syrup, eggs, and vanilla in a medium bowl. Add the dandelion flowers and mix well. Set aside.
3. Mix the flour, oats, cinnamon, baking soda, and salt in a medium bowl.
4. Add the dry mixture to the wet mixture and stir well. If using, mix in the raisins and/or walnuts.
5. Press the batter into the greased pie plate. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cool.

For the frosting:

1. Use a handheld mixer to combine the cream cheese, butter, and maple syrup. Taste and add more maple syrup if desired.

Assemble the cake: When cooled, invert the cake onto a sheet pan or large, flat plate. Frost the top and sides. Sprinkle the dandelion flowers on top.



ROASTED ROOTS BREW

We love this deeply nourishing brew served with dessert after a meal; the slight bitterness pairs well with sweets and promotes digestion.

Yield: 1 1/4 cups (1 serving)

1 teaspoon finely chopped roasted
dandelion root
1 teaspoon finely chopped roasted
chicory root
1 teaspoon finely chopped dried
burdock root
1½ cups water
Milk and honey (optional)

Directions:

1. Place all the herbs in a small saucepan. Add the water and bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes, covered.
2. Strain. Add milk and honey, if desired. Consume within 24 hours.



VIOLET OXYMEL

When you combine violet vinegar with honey, you get an oxymel that can be sipped by the spoonful to soothe a dry cough, mixed with sparkling water, or used in a cocktail. (To mix with sparkling water, start with 1 part oxymel to 4 parts sparkling water and adjust to taste.) Use a mild honey, such as light clover or wildflower, so you don't overpower the flavor of the violets. You can make any amount you like; just be sure to use equal parts vinegar and honey.

Yield: 1 cup

½ cup Violet Vinegar
(recipe below)

½ cup honey

Directions:

1. Combine vinegar and honey in a bowl and whisk to combine.
2. Pour the oxymel into a clean jar and cover with a nonreactive lid. Store in the refrigerator for up to 1 year.

VIOLET VINEGAR

You can use any species of edible *Viola* for this recipe, but those with deep purple blossoms will make the most exquisite jewel-colored vinegar. Drizzle violet vinegar over fruit and salad greens, or drink it in the form of an oxymel or cocktail.

Yield: 2 cups

1 cup fresh violet flowers

Up to 2 cups champagne vinegar
or white wine vinegar (at least
5% acidity)

Directions:

1. Put the violets in a pint jar. Pour in enough vinegar to fill the jar and submerge the flowers completely. (You might not use the entire 2 cups.)
2. Cover the jar, preferably with a glass or plastic lid (vinegar will corrode metal). If using a metal lid, place parchment paper between the lid and the jar. Label the jar.
3. Let the jar sit at room temperature, out of direct sunlight, for 1 to 2 weeks, shaking it daily. The longer you let it infuse, the stronger the flavor will be.
4. Strain the vinegar into a clean jar with a nonreactive lid. Store in the refrigerator for up to 1 year.





Wildcrafting Checklist

If we choose to use plants as our medicine, we then become accountable for the wild gardens, their health, and their upkeep. We begin a co-creative partnership with the plants, giving back what we receive—health, nourishment, beauty, and protection.

— ROSEMARY GLADSTAR

- ☐ How are you harvesting with attention and gratitude?
- ☐ What practices do you have to ensure that you are giving back more than you take?
- ☐ Can you correctly identify the plant? Are you 100 percent sure?
- ☐ Do you know the best time of year to harvest? The best time of day?
- ☐ Are you dressed appropriately for the weather and conditions? Do you need to bring water?
A first-aid kit?
- ☐ Do you have the proper tools?
- ☐ Do you have permission to gather?
- ☐ Is the area free from contamination?
- ☐ Are you in a fragile habitat? Are there rare or sensitive plants growing there at any time of the year? Will your actions cause soil erosion?
- ☐ Have you surveyed other areas to ensure this is an ideal location?
- ☐ How abundant or rare is the plant you want to harvest? Is it endangered, native, invasive?
- ☐ Is the plant population healthy in your region and in that particular stand?
- ☐ Do animals, birds, and insects depend on this plant for food or shelter?
- ☐ Will your actions kill a plant, prevent it from reproducing, or leave it vulnerable to disease?
How can you mitigate this?
- ☐ What is your plan for how you will use the plants you harvest?
- ☐ Are you harvesting only what you need?
- ☐ Are you harvesting what you can realistically dry, process, and store?
- ☐ Are you prepared to keep records to track your harvest and assess your impact?
- ☐ After harvesting, how will you tend to any holes or other clean-up activities?