

COLOR
ISSUE!

Life, etc.

Because style isn't just about what you wear.



EAT YOUR VEGGIES!

(NOT TO MENTION YOUR FRUITS!)

Celebrate spring with these gorgeous, flavor-packed recipes from natural foods guru and blogger Heidi Swanson—made all the more fun with the coolest new kitchen gadgets

BY ERIN ZAMMETT RUDDY
PHOTOGRAPHED BY ROMULO YANES



THE CHEF
Heidi Swanson

Considered side dishes in many kitchens, vegetables and fruits are the main event in Heidi Swanson's world. The San Francisco food blogger (101cookbooks.com) and author (her latest cookbook, *Super Natural Every Day*, hits

bookstores this month) focuses her passion on the farmers market and the just-picked gems she finds there. "Eating foods that are in season means you're getting more of everything—color, flavor, nutrients, even more texture," says Swanson. And the proof is in the pudding (or, in this case, the soup and stir-fry). These simple, satisfying recipes are Swanson's can't-miss choices for highlighting spring's bounty and creating a meal sure to excite guests. Add your creative touch to them with the help of inventive new prep tools, like the ones featured here, to make fun shapes and textures. "The possibilities are endless," says Swanson. So go ahead, play with your food!

the drink

SPARKLING SHANDY

SERVES 4

"Beer can be filling, but this is more like a light, spritzzy cocktail," says Swanson. And it's an easy crowd-pleaser—just multiply the recipe to keep 'em coming.

- 2 lemons, 1 thinly sliced (we used a mandoline) and 1 for juicing
- Ice cubes
- 1 16 oz. pilsner beer
- 2 cups sparkling lemonade

- 1** Line glass with lemon slices and add ice.
- 2** Fill halfway with beer, and top with lemonade.
- 3** Add a squeeze of lemon juice.



the salad

TANGY FARRO & RADISH **SERVES 4**

This crunchy, flavorful dish could take the place of a potato salad at a picnic or barbecue, says Swanson. Cook the farro (a type of wheat similar to pearl barley) ahead of time and it's a snap to put together. We found these pink watermelon radishes at the green market—experiment with varieties that you find locally.

- 2 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp fine-grain sea salt
- ½ cup buttermilk
- ¼ cup good-quality white wine vinegar
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup chopped dill, approximately 1 bunch
- ½ cup chopped chives, plus 2 tbsps for garnish
- 1 tbsp chopped thyme
- 5 small radishes, thinly sliced (we used a veggie cutter for these pretty shapes)
- 1 large zucchini, thinly sliced (we used a spiral slicer for strands; see p. 376)
- 1 medium head of fennel, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 2 cups cooked farro, cooled to room temperature (1 cup yields 2½ cups cooked). You can also use barley or any plump grain. Salt and pepper to taste



- 1** Combine garlic and salt on a cutting board and mash into a paste using flat side of a knife.
- 2** In a medium bowl whisk garlic paste, buttermilk, and vinegar together. Let sit for 5 minutes.
- 3** Gradually whisk in oil, then herbs, and set aside.
- 4** In a large bowl gently toss radishes, zucchini, and fennel with farro.
- 5** Add 1 cup dressing and toss again. Let sit for 10 minutes.
- 6** Taste and adjust with more dressing, if needed (use the leftovers on greens), and salt and pepper.
- 7** Sprinkle with chives and serve at room temperature.

the soup

PURE & SIMPLE CARROT SERVES 4

How easy is this dish to pull off? When Swanson gets really fresh carrots from the farmers market, she doesn't even peel them. "Just give them a good scrub with the rough side of a sponge and you're ready to go," she says. Salt is essential in this soup, especially if you use water instead of stock—keep adding and tasting until the flavor really pops.

- 1¼ lb. carrots, tops discarded, plus extra for garnish (use a vertical spiral slicer to create carrot ribbon garnish)
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 medium cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- 4 cups vegetable stock or water
- Juice of ½ lemon
- Fine-grain sea salt and black pepper to taste
- Optional, for drizzling: Olive oil, red chile oil, or toasted sesame oil (dilute sesame oil by mixing one part with four parts olive oil)



- 1** Peel or scrub carrots, cut into 1-inch segments, and set aside.
- 2** Heat oil in a large, heavy pot over medium heat. Toss in garlic and onions. Sauté until onions start to get translucent, about 7 minutes.
- 3** Add stock and carrots, and bring to a gentle boil. Lower heat and simmer for 20–30 minutes or until carrots are tender (try not to overcook). Remove from heat and cool for a few minutes.
- 4** Purée soup (leave it a little chunky if you like), and stir in lemon juice.
- 5** Salt and pepper to taste until carrot flavor blossoms. Finish with a drizzle of oil and a snippet of carrot ribbon.



the main course

HOT, COOL + SWEET ASPARAGUS STIR-FRY SERVES 4

The heat comes from the red chiles and fresh ginger, the mint and basil cool things down, and the hoisin sauce adds the perfect amount of sweetness. The fragrances unfurl as they cook—this is a hot stove you want to stand in front of! "Be sure to have all your ingredients prepped and within arm's reach," Swanson says. "Because once you fire up the wok, the cooking goes fast."

- Toasted sesame oil
- 16 oz. extra-firm tofu (patted dry and cut into slices as thick as a pencil and 1" square)
- 8 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1½ tbsp freshly grated ginger, peeled
- 1 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 bunch asparagus, trimmed and cut at an angle into long pieces (we opted for a combination of long pieces and strands made with a julienne peeler)
- Fine-grain sea salt
- 6 cloves garlic, chopped
- ½ cup cashews, chopped (toasted in a dry pan on a stove)
- A few handfuls of spinach (or chopped kale or chard)
- 2 limes, zested and juiced
- 4 tbsp hoisin sauce
- 1 small bunch fresh mint, slivered
- 1 small bunch fresh basil, slivered



- 1** Heat a splash of sesame oil in a large pan or well-seasoned wok over medium-high heat.
- 2** Once hot, add tofu and cook until golden, about 5 minutes. Remove from pan and set aside.
- 3** Add another big splash of oil to pan, and as soon as it's hot, toss in onions, ginger, red pepper flakes, asparagus, and salt. Stir-fry for about 1 minute.
- 4** Add garlic, cashews and spinach. Stir-fry for another minute, or until spinach wilts.
- 5** Return tofu to pan.
- 6** Mix in lime zest and juice and hoisin sauce. Cook for another 10–20 seconds, stirring constantly.
- 7** Remove from heat and stir in mint and basil.
- 8** Salt to taste and serve immediately.



the dessert

RUSTIC CHERRY COBBLER SERVES 8

This juicy, fruity goodness begs to be served with vanilla ice cream or freshly whipped, lightly sweetened cream. (Fold in a tablespoon of amaretto, brandy or whiskey for cream with a kick.) While whole wheat flour is a Swanson fave, unbleached works fine too.

- 2½ cups sweet cherries, pitted (about 1 pound) (we suggest using a cherry pitter)
- 1 tbsp cornstarch
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1¼ cups whole wheat pastry flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ⅓ cup brown sugar
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ cup toasted nuts (optional)
- 1 egg
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 3 tbsps butter, melted and cooled a bit



Cherry and olive pitter, Cuisipro, \$12; centralchef.com.

- 1** Place rack in top third of oven and preheat to 425°F.
- 2** Butter a 9-inch round baking pan or dish.
- 3** In a small bowl gently toss cherries with cornstarch and sugar. Set aside.
- 4** In a large bowl combine flour, baking powder, brown sugar, salt, and nuts to make topping.
- 5** In another bowl whisk together egg and buttermilk, then whisk in butter.
- 6** Fold buttermilk mixture into flour mixture until it's barely combined.
- 7** Pour fruit into prepared pan.
- 8** Top cherries with dough by dropping dollops into pan, 1 tbsp each—not too big or they won't cook through.
- 9** Bang pan against counter to flatten, and push batter around and out to edges with your fingers if necessary—you'll want just a few cracks for cherries to peep through and juices to bubble up.
- 10** Bake 15–20 minutes or until top is golden and cooked through.

MORE FUN TOOLS TO TRY



Create little veggie cups to hold mini hors d'oeuvres (like sushi!). This tool takes some practice to master, but a helpful how-to video on the site below makes it clear.

Cylinder vegetable cutter, JB Prince, \$45; jbrprince.com.



"Sharpen" the narrow end of a firm vegetable, like a yellow carrot, above, as if it were a pencil to yield delicate, edible shavings.

Easy carrot curler, Kitchen Works, \$5; kitchenworksinc.com.



Give all your vegetables that potato-chip look with this easy-to-use slicer.

Good Grips crinkle cutter, OXO, \$8; oxo.com.



Handle this as you would a corkscrew. (This time the veggie is the cork!) Poke, twirl and pull this ingenious tool through a carrot or potato. Then, make a shallow slit down the side to pry open and release the coil inside.

Curl cutter, JB Prince, \$5; jbrprince.com.



Make an Edible Centerpiece!

- 1** Pour dried beans into a clear glass vase to build the bottom layer, about 3 inches high.
- 2** Top with a piece of wheatgrass, cut to size.
- 3** Use the curl cutter, left, to make coils out of carrots (or any firm vegetable).
- 4** Place on wooden skewers and poke into the grass.