



Beaufort County is blessed with an abundance of delicious produce! There's nothing tastier than a fresh-picked tomato from St. Helena Island or a juicy ripe South Carolina peach. How lucky we are to have a great place to shop where we can purchase this locally-grown bounty! I'm talking about our wonderful farmers' markets. The markets – open Wednesdays in downtown Beaufort, Friday afternoons at Habersham, Saturday mornings in Pork Royal, Thursday afternoons in downtown Bluffton, and Friday mornings at Honey Horn on Hilton Head – are great places to shop for the freshest fruits, vegetables, home-baked breads and plants.

Locally-grown fruit and vegetables have been fabulous so far this season! Vendors are also selling flowers and herbs, plants, honey, fresh baked breads, organic eggs, soaps and local meat and seafood. This week's recipes are perfect for showcasing our locally-grown produce. Support our local farmers' markets and taste for yourself. This is your invitation to see and taste the goodness that grows in South Carolina. p.s. I hear that a new farmers' market is opening at Pick Pocket Plantation beginning on Tuesday, June 21st!

Tomato-Watermelon Salad with Feta and Pine Nuts

8 cups (1-1/4 inch chunks) seedless watermelon
6 cups (1-1/4 inch chunks) ripe tomatoes, in assorted colors
1 teaspoon kosher salt
5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1-1/2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
6 cups mixed salad greens
1 cup crumbled feta cheese
1/3 cup pine nuts, lightly toasted
Fresh mint, to garnish

Combine melon and tomatoes in a large bowl. Sprinkle with salt and toss to blend. Add 4 tablespoons oil, vinegar and mint to melon mixture. Season to taste with salt and pepper, if desired. Toss salad greens in a medium bowl with remaining tablespoon olive oil. Place on a

platter. Top with melon salad; sprinkle with feta cheese, toasted pine nuts and fresh mint. Serves 6 to 8.

Heirloom Tomatoes with Fresh Peaches, Goat Cheese and Pecans

Whisk together 1/3 cup white balsamic vinegar; 1 garlic clove, minced; 2 tablespoons brown sugar; 2 tablespoons olive oil; and 1/8 teaspoon salt. Stir in one peeled and diced fresh peach and 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil. Spoon over sliced heirloom tomatoes; top with 3 ounces crumbled goat cheese and 1/2 cup coarsely chopped toasted pecans. Sprinkle with freshly ground black pepper, to taste.

Spinach Salad with Blueberries

1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/4 cup raspberry vinegar
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 (10-ounce) package fresh spinach, torn into bite sized pieces
1 (4-ounce) package blue cheese, crumbled
1 cup fresh blueberries
1/2 cup chopped pecans, toasted

Combine the first five ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake well. In a large salad bowl, toss the spinach, blue cheese, blueberries, and pecans. Add dressing and toss gently; serve immediately. Serves 6 to 8.

Pickled Okra

2 pounds fresh okra
3 cups white vinegar
1 1/2 cups water
1 1/2 tablespoons salt
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
1/2 cup chopped fresh dill
1 1/2 tablespoons dill seed

Rinse and drain the okra, snipping off the very tip of the stem, but not removing the cap. Stand the okra in sterilized pint jars. Combine the vinegar, water and salt in a 2-quart saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat. Boil for 5 minutes. Add the crushed red pepper, dill and dill seed and boil for 2 minutes longer. Pour the hot vinegar and water mixture over the okra, covering the okra, but leaving a 1-inch head space in the jar. Place sterilized lids on the jars and refrigerate before serving. Store in the refrigerator for up to 30 days. Serves 24 to 30.

Yellow Squash and Basil Soup

4 tablespoons butter
1 medium sweet onion, chopped
4 yellow squash, sliced
3 medium carrots, sliced
1 (14-ounce) can chicken broth
1 cup water

¼ cup milk

¼ cup heavy cream

½ teaspoon salt

Coarsely ground white pepper

1 cup (loosely packed) fresh basil leaves, chopped

In a 4-quart saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add onion and cook about 8 minutes or until onion is tender, stirring frequently. Add squash and carrot slices; stir to coat with onion mixture. Add chicken broth and water; heat to boiling over high heat. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer 20 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Allow vegetables to cool slightly. In a blender at low speed, with center part of cover removed to allow steam to escape, blend soup in small batches until pureed. Pour pureed soup into large bowl after each batch. Return soup to saucepan, stir in milk, cream, salt and white pepper; heat through. Stir in chopped basil just before serving. Serves 6 to 8.

Roasted Rosemary Potato Salad

2½ pounds new potatoes, quartered

1 medium red onion, cut into wedges

4 tablespoons olive oil, divided

2 tablespoons snipped fresh rosemary

2 cloves garlic, minced

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

1 medium red sweet pepper, cut into bite-sized strips

3 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted

Combine potatoes, onion wedges, 2 tablespoons olive oil, rosemary, garlic, salt and pepper in a large mixing bowl. Toss to coat. Arrange potato mixture in a single layer in a greased shallow roasting pan. Roast, uncovered, in a preheated 450 degree oven for 25 to 30 minutes or until potatoes are tender and lightly browned, stirring twice. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine balsamic vinegar and the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil; whisk to combine. Add the red pepper to the oil mixture. Add the pepper mixture to the roasted potatoes immediately after removing from the oven; toss to coat. Turn into a serving bowl; sprinkle with pine nuts. Serve warm or at room temperature. Serves 8.

Peach and Blueberry Cobbler

1 tablespoon cornstarch

¼ cup light brown sugar

½ cup cold water

2 cups sliced fresh peaches, sprinkled lightly with sugar

1 cup fresh blueberries

1 tablespoon butter

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1 cup sifted all-purpose flour (sift before measuring)

½ cup sugar

1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon salt

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Written by Debbi Covington

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½ cup milk

4 tablespoons butter, softened

2 tablespoons sugar

¼ teaspoon nutmeg

Preheat oven to 350degrees. Combine cornstarch, brown sugar, and water in a medium-sized saucepan. Add the peaches and the blueberries and cook, stirring, over medium heat until the mixture thickens. Stir in 1 tablespoon of the butter and lemon juice. Pour mixture into a lightly greased 8-inch round baking dish. Sift the flour, 1/2 cup sugar, baking powder, and salt into a mixing bowl. Add the milk and 4 tablespoons of softened butter and beat with an electric mixer until smooth. Pour flour mixture over fruit. Sprinkle top with 2 tablespoons sugar and nutmeg. Bake for 30 minutes. Serves 6 to 8.

Lime Mint Tea

8-1/2 cups water, divided

6 regular-size tea bags

2 cups loosely packed fresh mint leaves, chopped

1-1/2 cups sugar

1-3/4 cups lemon juice

1/3 cup fresh lime juice

Fresh mint to garnish

Bring 4 cups water to a boil in a large saucepan; pour over tea bags. Cover and steep 5 minutes; discard tea bags. Stir in mint; let stand 15 minutes. Pour tea through a wire-mesh strainer into a bowl, discarding mint. Bring remaining 4-1/4 cups water and sugar to a boil in saucepan; cool. Stir in tea and juices. Chill; serve over ice. Garnish, if desired. Makes 10 cups.

Bourbon-Infused Honey

1 cup local honey

1 large bay leaf

¼ cup bourbon

In a small saucepan heat honey and bay leaf over medium heat just until mixture bubbles around the edges. Reduce heat to low and cook for 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in bourbon. Set aside to cool, about 1 hour. Remove bay leaf. Transfer honey to jar and store overnight or up to 5 days in the refrigerator. (An excellent hostess gift! Delicious when used to sweeten iced tea or drizzled over ice cream.) Makes 1 cup.

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