
COOKING FRESH



Although our winter cold snap has reduced many local stone fruit crops, in May shop for apricots, peaches and some nectarines, followed by plums. You'll also see artichokes and the late spring crop of Arizona sweet onions and the first of the mature garlic.

Summer truly begins with squash, cucumbers, beans and other warm-weather veggies, followed by tomatoes, corn and lots of summer basil.

As the heat of summer intensifies, only the heartiest fruits and vegetables (such as the ever-prolific zucchini and melons) will flourish.

In August and September, the new planting cycle begins along with the harvest of end-of-summer vegetables such as winter squash. Be sure to inhale the heady green smoke of roasting chiles and then freeze enough to last for the upcoming year.

For native foods, look for ripe saguaro fruit in June and July. Harvest honey-brown mesquite beans before the summer rains. Celebrate San Juan's day (June 24) as the traditional start of the summer planting season. Pick wild greens after the arrival of the monsoon in July.

NOW IN SEASON

Apples (Annas are first to ripen)
Apricots
Artichokes
Basil (many varieties)
Black-eyed peas
Chiles
Corn
Cucumbers (slicers, Armenian, lemon)
Eggplant
Figs (early crop)
Garlic
Grapes
Green Beans
Leeks
Melons (Cantaloupe, Honeydew, etc)
Nectarines
Okra
Onions (Red, Yellow, Grilling and Arizona Sweet)
Peaches
Peppers
Pinto Beans
Plums
Potatoes
Rosemary
Squash Blossoms
Summer Squash
Sunflowers
Tomatoes
Watermelon
Winter Squash
Zucchini

POSSIBILITIES

Enjoy the season's leeks with the last of the carrots for this refreshing summer soup. Garnish with thin slices of lemon, lime or orange.

CHILLED CARROT AND GINGER SOUP

3 Tbsp. chopped shallots
1 leek, white part only, chopped
2 tsps. butter
7 carrots
2 Tbsp. grated ginger
2 quarts chicken stock
2 Tbsp. long-grain rice
1 cup heavy cream
Salt and pepper

Sweat the shallots and leek in the butter. Add the chopped carrots, grated ginger and salt and pepper. Stir well. Then add the chicken stock and rice and simmer for 30 minutes.

Puree the soup in a blender (being careful with the hot liquid) or with an immersion blender, strain and chill.

Before serving add the cream and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. Serves 6 to 8.

*Recipe courtesy of Chef Pascal Dionot of Classic Cooking
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