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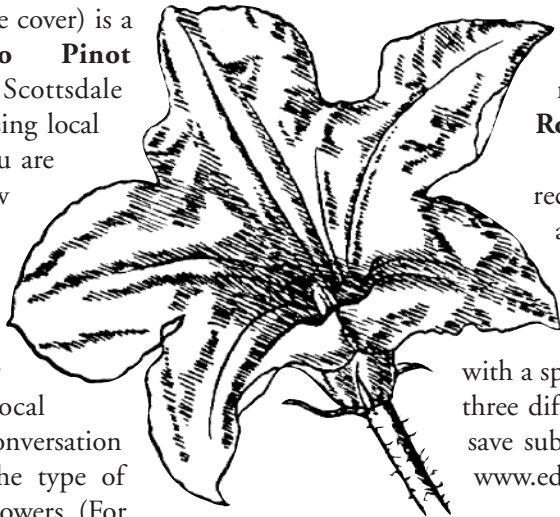
# VALLEY BITES

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BY PAMELA HAMILTON

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My favorite use for squash blossoms (like those on the cover) is a recipe from **Rancho Pinot Restaurant** (6208 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale) made using local Arizona goat cheese. If you are fortunate enough to grow your own blossoms, pick the male flowers (thinner stems) mid-morning once the flower buds have opened. If you gather your blossoms at a local farmers' market, have a conversation with the grower about the type of squash that produces the flowers. (For example, **Maya's Farm** [480] 236-7097 grows the guarijio squash for its extra-large blooms).



Wherever you find your squash blossoms, eat them right away as they are highly perishable. Create a very simple dish by shredding the flowers into cheese quesadillas. Or, get a little fancier and stuff the blooms with cheese, vegetables or seafood mousse filling.

I found out the other day that late spring and early summer are prime times for egg production. You still have to go to the farmers' markets *really* early to score a dozen (or get to know one of the vendors and put in a standing order), but the supply is greater.

Some of the egg vendors, like **Rainbow Valley Nursery** ([www.rainbowvalleynurseryaz.com](http://www.rainbowvalleynurseryaz.com)) migrate to the Prescott and Flagstaff farmers' markets for the summer. A visit to one of these Northern Arizona markets on a Saturday or Sunday is a nice day trip and provides a bit of a break from our summer weather. See **Prescott Farmers Market** ([www.prescottfarmersmarket.org](http://www.prescottfarmersmarket.org)) and **Flagstaff Community Market** ([www.flagstaffmarket.com](http://www.flagstaffmarket.com)) and don't forget your cooler!

The Roosevelt arts area just north of downtown continues to grow as a dining destination. **Fate** (905 N. Fourth Street, Phoenix) has been remodeled and the food is better than ever. It will be joined by a new small bites sister bar/restaurant next door in late summer or early fall. (I suggested the name Destiny to the owner). Long-time favorite **Matt's Big Breakfast** (801 N. First Street, Phoenix) has been joined by a sophisticated older brother, **The Roosevelt** tavern (816 N. Third Street, Phoenix). Also look for an indoor

extension to the **Downtown Phoenix Public Market** (Central and McKinley Streets, Phoenix) in the fall. For more information on other restaurants and businesses in the area, check out the **Roosevelt Row** website ([www.rooseveltrow.org](http://www.rooseveltrow.org)).

One of the joys of owning an *Edible* publication is receiving copies of my sister publications from around the United States each season. Each community has its own personality and it's fun to catch up on the news from places I've lived and those I plan to visit. You can now do the same with a special offer from Edible Communities: Subscribe to three different *Edible* publications for only \$45 a year and save substantially over the standard subscription rate. See [www.ediblecommunities.com/subscribe/](http://www.ediblecommunities.com/subscribe/).

## STUFFED SQUASH BLOSSOMS

Adapted from Chef Chrysa Kaufman

- 12 large or 16 small squash blossoms
- 1/3 cup fresh goat cheese
- 1/3 cup ricotta cheese
- 1/4 cup Parmigiano, Asiago and/or Pecorino cheeses, grated
- 1 Tbsp. mixed chopped fresh herbs (basil, marjoram, parsley, cilantro and mint are options)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup toasted ground bread crumbs
- Olive oil

Mix the cheeses with the herbs and salt and pepper to taste. Add just enough egg to keep everything together (keep the remaining egg to use later).

Put the cheese mixture into a pastry bag, use it to fill the squash blossoms and then twist the ends of the blossoms to enclose the filling. Dip the stuffed blossoms gently into the remaining beaten eggs, and then roll them lightly in toasted ground bread crumbs. Fry quickly in about a half-inch of olive oil, turning to brown all sides.

Ranch Pinot serves the squash blossoms with an arugula salad topped with a cherry tomato vinaigrette. Serves four as an appetizer.