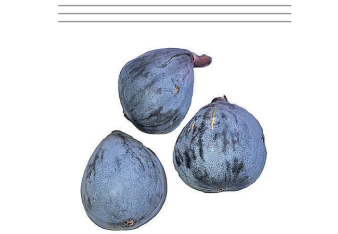


Picks of the WEEK



Black Mission figs

Nearly a dozen varieties of fresh figs are available at the Tuesday Santa Barbara, Wednesday Solvang, Saturday Santa Barbara and Sunday Camino Real farmers markets from a number of growers. Some have light and dark green alternating stripes; some are pale yellow, others brown; and some, like these Black Mission figs, possess such a dark purple pigment that they often appear black. Through a very unusual process, the fig flowers are pollinated by tiny wasps that crawl through the opening in search of a suitable place to lay eggs. Without this pollinating experience, fig trees wouldn't be able to reproduce their seeds. The fig itself is a network of numerous one-sided fruits, not merely a single fruit as it appears. The Black Mission variety tends to deliver the most dynamic flavor of all. It's candy-sweet and can be enjoyed raw or cooked. This week, I went the cooked route by preparing Campfire Goat Cheese and Bacon Stuffed Figs, the Fix of the Week on page A7. About \$5 per basket.



Opo squash

Taking on a physique similar to that of a large globe eggplant, the light green Opo squash can be sweet, bitter or a little mix of both, depending on what stage it is harvested off the vine. The relatively thick outer layer of the squash is discarded along with the seed pocket. The flesh, which tastes similar to zucchini, can be sliced into cubes and steamed, sautéed or roasted. It is traditionally incorporated into Asian soups. Opo squash is available from Her Family Farm at the Saturday Santa Barbara and Sunday Camino Real Marketplace markets. \$2 per pound.



Red Flame grapes

August signals the start of the fresh table grape season. While local vineyards are continuing to let their fruit mature over the coming months, many table grape growers are already in full harvest mode. The first to arrive, and one of the most commonly sought grapes, are these Red Flames. The medium-sized grape is compactly clustered on the vine, yielding a large ratio of individual grapes per cluster. Sweet, crisp and juicy, they are excellent straight out of the refrigerator, or even freezer, on a warm afternoon. Incorporate into a fruit salad or place on a skewer with cubed melon, mozzarella, basil and prosciutto. A good source of vitamin C, these grapes are offered by many local growers at all Santa Barbara Certified Farmers Markets. About \$3 per pound.

Sam Edelman is general manager of the Santa Barbara Certified Farmers Market Association; Rafael Maldonado/News-Press photos

Food

THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 2017

Indoor S'mores

You may not miss the mosquitos biting. Or those moments when there's nothing but stillness on the end of your fishing line. Or a sore back after sleeping on a dirt floor. But, if you're like us after you get back from a camping trip, it isn't long after you walk in the door that you start to miss being in the forest at twilight — even if it does bring out the skeeters. Lounging in the boat on a glassy lake — even if the trout ignore your spiffy new bait. Falling asleep to the crickets — even if you wake up with a kinked back. And the s'mores. Always the s'mores. With summer winding down, we've come up with a few recipes inspired by the popular campfire treat to enjoy once you're back home. The great outdoors? One taste of these and it'll be more like the great indoors.

— Charlotte Boechler

Recipes and photos by Denisse Salinas, owner of Le Petit Chef in Santa Barbara

S'mores Brownie Pie

Enjoy s'mores in brownie pie form for a delicious change of pace. Traditional s'mores ingredients are adapted with a graham cracker crust, a chocolate brownie filling and a heavenly layer of toasted marshmallow fluff on top.

For the crust:
1 cup graham cracker crumbs
6 tablespoons melted unsalted butter
2 tablespoons granulated sugar

For the brownie:
½ cup unsalted butter
2 ounces dark chocolate, chopped
¼ cup unsweetened natural cocoa powder
1 large egg
1 egg yolk**½ cup granulated sugar**
1 teaspoon vanilla extract**¼ teaspoon salt**
½ cup all-purpose flour**¼ cup dark chocolate chunks**

For the marshmallow fluff:
1/3 cup water
¾ cup granulated sugar
¾ cup corn syrup or honey
3 large egg whites, room temperature
½ teaspoon cream of tartar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9-inch pie dish with cooking spray; set aside. Stir together graham cracker crumbs, melted butter and sugar in a medium bowl. Press mixture into the bottom and up the sides of pie dish. Bake crust for about 10 minutes, until it just starts to brown. Cool

completely. Add the butter, chocolate and cocoa powder to a medium, microwave-safe bowl and heat to melt, about 45 seconds. Stir and continue to heat in 10-second increments until mixture is smooth; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the egg, egg yolk and sugar. Whisk in the vanilla and salt. Add the chocolate mixture and whisk to combine. Stir in the flour and chocolate chunks until just combined. Pour batter in an even layer over the cooled graham cracker crust and bake for about 22-25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out mostly clean. Cool completely. Make the marshmallow fluff while the brownie pie is baking by placing water, sugar and corn syrup or honey in a medium saucepan. Stir to combine. Insert a candy thermometer into the pot and heat over medium-high. Place the egg whites and cream of tartar in the bowl of a stand mixer. When the sugar syrup reaches about 225 degrees, begin whipping the egg whites until soft peaks form (about 3-4 minutes). When the sugar syrup reaches 240 degrees, remove from the heat. Turn mixer to medium and very slowly and carefully pour the sugar syrup into the whites in a thin, steady stream. Set mixer to medium-high and continue whipping until thick, fluffy and glossy (about 6-7 minutes). Add in vanilla and whip gently until incorporated. Top brownie pie with marshmallow fluff and toast lightly with a culinary torch. **Yield:** 8 servings



Frozen S'mores Latte

A frozen s'mores latte is a decadent way to enjoy your daily cup of joe. Make sure to have all the ingredients and culinary torch at the ready before beginning so that the latte can be assembled quickly and enjoyed before it begins to melt.

1-2 tablespoons homemade or store-bought chocolate syrup, plus more for coating the mug
1 tablespoon graham cracker crumbs
1 cup brewed coffee, cooled
¼ cup milk
1 cup ice
1-2 tablespoons mini marshmallows

Drizzle rim of mug with chocolate syrup and sprinkle with graham cracker crumbs. Blend coffee, milk, 1-2 tablespoons chocolate syrup and ice. Pour into a glass. Top with marshmallows and toast them lightly with a culinary torch. **Yield:** 1 serving



S'mores Ice Cream Pops

Whimsical s'mores ice cream pops will steal the spotlight every time, with a dairy-free chocolate fudge pop layered with roasted marshmallows and topped with chocolate drizzle and graham cracker crumbs.

For the ice cream pops:
1 (14-ounce) can full-fat coconut milk
½ cup cocoa powder
¼ cup dark chocolate chips**1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
¼ cup maple syrup
1 pinch salt
½ cup mini marshmallows, roasted and cooled

For the topping:
½ cup dark chocolate chips
1 tablespoon coconut oil
¼ cup graham cracker crumbs

Place all of the ice cream pop ingredients, except marshmallows, in a pot over medium heat and warm the mix until chocolate melts (don't simmer or boil). Remove from the heat and let cool. Pour mixture halfway up the ice cream pop molds. Freeze for 1 hour. Remove ice cream pops from freezer and add half of marshmallows to the frozen layer. Pour remaining ice cream pop mixture into molds until almost full. Top with remaining marshmallows and freeze completely, for at least 6 hours. In a double boiler (water simmering in a pot with a heatproof bowl placed on top), melt remaining dark chocolate chips for the topping and coconut oil. Once melted, turn the heat off and leave the bowl over the pot so the chocolate stays warm. Once frozen, take the ice cream pops out of their mold. Drizzle with the melted chocolate, then sprinkle with crumbled graham crackers. **Yield:** about 10 serving

