

Caron

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The truth is that you can favor locally grown food-stuffs but still not eat in a 100-mile radius. Hell, if you're buying Maine Grains oats in Portland, chances are those oats are from a lot farther than that distance. It's about 100 miles from Portland to the Skowhegan alone, and with

many of the grains being grown farther north in The County — well, you do the math.

What does eating local mean to you? To me, it's food grown where I live (Maine), preferably by farmers I see regularly. And I am so glad it's something I can do so easily here.

As for this recipe, it's one I have made countless times in different variations over the years. The basic premise is always the

same: You slow roast veggies together, bringing out their inherent sweetness, and then toss them with al dente pasta and perhaps cheese.

I make this dish whenever I don't have a plan for dinner. Or when we want pasta, but not a heavy dish. Or when the kitchen is over-run with veggies that need to be used but don't have a plan. It's flexible and easy, though it does take about an hour.

This version of my dish also has a hint of lemon flavor. It's not overpowering, though — roasting infuses lemon flavor into the veggies while limiting the acidness of it. Of course, if you want a stronger lemon flavor, squeeze a little extra fresh lemon on the pasta just before serving.

Whatever you do, just be sure to remove the lemon rind — it's quite bitter, even after roasting.

You can choose a different mix of veggies if you prefer — green bell peppers instead of the red ones, leeks instead of onions, adding broccoli or skipping it altogether. It's also seasoned lightly — adjust the seasonings to your preferences. I like the subtle flavors with or without cheese, but you might want to make it a touch bolder whether it's with more lemon flavor or a sprinkle of fresh chopped herbs.

Any which way though, it's one of our favorites.

Sarah Walker Caron is the senior features editor for the Bangor Daily News and author of "Grains as Mains: Modern Recipes Using Ancient Grains," available at bookstores everywhere including BAM, The Briar Patch and Bull Moose in Bangor. For more delicious recipes, check out Maine Course at mainecourse.bangordailynews.com.

Soba Noodle Bowl

Serves 2

½ cup (plus or minus) raw, chopped vegetables or greens shredded
½ cup (plus or minus) pickled vegetables
½ cup (plus or minus) cooked meat, fish or shellfish, or 2 fried eggs (optional)
½ a small onion chopped, and/or a clove of garlic raw or lightly sauteed
1 quart boiling water
A bundle of soba noodles about one inch in diameter
Toasted sesame seeds
Soy or hot sauce to serve

Assemble the vegetables and optional protein.
Saute lightly the onion and/or garlic if you wish.
Add the noodles to the boiling water and cook three to five minutes. Drain.
Divide the noodles between two soup bowls and top with the vegetables and optional meat. Sprinkle on the sesame seeds.
Serve immediately with soy or other sauce.

Oliver

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mercial pickled ginger you see in the ethnic food aisle or lightly pickled cucumbers, and I suppose even dilly beans. I'd be inclined even to drop some chutney or relish into the bowl of noodles.

Some onion or garlic chopped up, lightly sauteed, really helps. Toasting the sesame seeds a little really improves their flavor. I'm thinking I ought to toast up a bunch of them for all-purpose sprinkling. Soy sauce is fine, but if you like hot sauce, by all means use that.

Soba cooks in only a few minutes — about five. Pull one out after three or so minutes and bite it to see if it is al dente yet. Don't let the noodles get soggy. We ate our noodles warm but they are just as good cold.

You can see that this dish can soak up miscellaneous leftovers and stray vegetables in the fridge for an economical meal. I'm still getting used to this new word — soba. It just wasn't in my standard Yankee vocabulary, but neither was fettuccine until I was an adult.

Send queries or answers to Sandy Oliver, 1061 Main Road, Islesboro 04848. Email sandyoliver47@gmail.com. For recipes, tell us where they came from, list ingredients, specify number of servings and do not abbreviate measurements. Include name, address and daytime phone number. And make sure to check out Sandy's blog at tastebuds.bangordailynews.com.

Brunch

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TIQA

327 Commercial St.

WHAT: Huge, swank Mediterranean restaurant anchoring the Courtyard Marriott. Executive chef Robert Krajewski cooks, his wife, Lynette Mosher, bakes. Together they are "brunchinizing" world street food and retooling morning classics.

SIGNATURE DISHES: Lamjun flatbread. This Turkish dish is built on a housemade pita baked with lamb confit and topped with an herb salad and sunny-side eggs. "It's one of the dishes I am most proud of," said Krajewski. The result is "ethereal and fluffy," adds Mosher, whose salted caramel babka is not to be overlooked. Move over sticky bun.

DRINK: Blood orange mimosa, or harissa bloody Mary.

DON'T MISS: Israel-style potato latkes. Crisp, shredded potatoes with onions and scallions "take up the whole plate," said Krajewski. Served with fried eggs and creme fraiche, it's a protein-packed meal.

BONUS: Coffee By Design created the perfect blend to complement this international fare. Arrives in a French press, four sizes.

Hours: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday.

Sur Lie

11 Free St.

WHAT: Eclectic brunch in a friendly, small-plates den. Inventive and cheerful chef Emil Rivera "drafts the menu on Saturday nights but, the 'Sunday morning feeling' pretty much makes the last call." A popular downtown

offering since Mother's Day.

SIGNATURE DISH: The Fat Boy Breakfast: butter-milk pancake, bacon sausage, maple syrup, cheddar sauce and fried egg. Need we say more? Good fuel for the morning after.

DRINK: Gazpacho bloody Mary, the salad that drinks like a cocktail.

DON'T MISS: Golden potato hash brown with piquillo emulsion and crispy fried egg.

BONUS: Maine blueberry and lemon glaze doughnuts to pop between courses.

Hours: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday.

Bayside American Cafe

98 Portland St.

WHAT: Eggs served a dozen ways in a buzzy, turn-of-the-century building, formerly Bintliffs. "With the arched ceiling, it feels like a big old ship," said general manager Joe Catoggio. "People feel comfortable here." And so will you.

SIGNATURE DISHES: Bayou Benedict, a play on the classic featuring andouille sausage on grilled corn cakes slathered with Cajun-style hollandaise, "just enough to know its there." Lobster Benedict features a half lobster per order. No traitors there.

DRINK: Bloody Marys with tequila or a Bellini, the elegant peach juice and champagne refresher.

DON'T MISS: Cinnamon roll pancakes, which "took the restaurant by storm." Americans have a sweet tooth and this dish topped with creme anglaise frosting will make you swoon.

BONUS: The open, friendly kitchen is like a comedy act on the mad weekends. Grab a cup of coffee as you wait for your table and take in the show.

Brewery

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If demand exceeds supply, the couples can expand into a 6,000-square-foot warehouse the Parkers own in an industrial park — though that will require going through the permitting process again.

And even if they do expand later, they plan to keep the brewing facility at the restaurant.

"We need to have a small system on site so people can see what we're doing. That's part of the draw," Danielle Parker said.

Iyisa Gardner also has been experimenting with her husband's beer in recipes at home.

"If I've got beer on tap, she's cooking with it," Matthew Gardner said.

Iyisa Gardner will use her experience cooking

with beer to develop recipes for Skywalker's, which will be changing its name to the Machias River Brewing Co. Brew Pub once the brewery opens. The pub, located on Route 1, will get an interior makeover with photographs and artifacts related to the Machias River.

"This will be like taking a trip down the Machias River," said John Parker.

The couples have a long list of names for future beers, and these will also be tied to the local area, especially the river.

"That river's been the lifeblood of this area for generations," said Matthew Gardner.

In fact, the tagline for their operation is "Take me to the river." T-shirts they had made with the tagline on the back and the name of the company on the front are already creating a buzz, they said.



COURTESY OF TIQA

Lamjun flatbread at TIQA in Portland is a new brunch classic.

HOURS: 7 to 2 p.m. seven days a week. Brunch all day.

Outliers Eatery

231 York St.

SIGNATURE DISHES: Duck hash with poached eggs served with sweet potatoes and beets. Gourmet blueberry lemon pancakes have couples, families and singletons coming back for more.

DRINK: Boozy coffee: Swift River Coffee spiked with Jameson Irish Whiskey and Baileys. This will cut through the autumn fog over the Fore River.

DON'T MISS: One of the best decks in town with views of the Casco Bay Bridge.

BONUS: Urban elan tucked into the quiet West End and crispy pig ears with chipotle maple glaze.

Hours: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday.



COURTESY OF EMIL RIVERA

Brunch at Sur Lie changes with the whims of its Latin chef, Emil Rivera. His golden potato hash brown, piquillo emulsion and crispy fried egg is a gourmet smash.



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