



8/24/11

Dear Members,

In the share this week you'll find tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, bell peppers, lettuce, carrots, red onions, and basil. The red onions make a nice addition to salads, sliced very thinly as in the following recipe for tomato-basil salad. They are also a good multipurpose cooking onion.

- 1 large tomato, chopped
- 1 avocado, flesh chopped into cubes
- ¼ red onion, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup basil, minced
- 4 tbs olive oil
- 1 tbs cider or wine vinegar
- 2 oz Soft goat or cow cheese (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Mix tomato, avocado, onion, and basil in a bowl. In a separate bowl, mix olive oil, vinegar, optional soft cheese, salt and pepper to make a dressing. Pour dressing over vegetables, toss and serve.

Another nice way to use basil is to preserve it in cider vinegar. This both preserves the basil leaves as a fresh addition to winter salads, while simultaneously flavoring the vinegar it's steeped in with a wonderful basil flavor. All you need to do is chop up enough basil leaves to fill a glass canning jar (4-8oz sizes work well), and then fill the jar with cider vinegar, cap it and store it in a cool, dark place (we do it in our kitchen cabinets). Whenever you want to use some, just open the jar take out what you want, and re-cap it until next time! You can do the same thing with basil in olive oil, adding salt at a ratio of 1 tsp of salt to 1 pound of basil.

Here's a recipe for a marinara sauce, using a number of the veggies in this week's share:

- 2 tbs butter or olive oil
- ½ red onion, finely chopped
- 1 small, or ½ large zucchini, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ¾ lb. tomatoes (about 1.5 cups), chopped
- ¼ cup basil, minced
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Heat the butter or olive oil in a pot over medium heat. Sauté onion until just soft, about 3-5 minutes. Add zucchini, bell pepper and garlic and sauté for another 3 minutes until zucchini is softening. Stir in tomatoes and basil and cook, stirring occasionally until sauce is slightly thickened, about 20 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. This sauce goes excellently over pasta, baked or grilled fish, or meatballs. If putting it over meatballs you can add ¼ cup beef stock to the sauce when you add the tomatoes, and cook it down slightly longer to evaporate some of the extra liquid. This deepens the flavor wonderfully.

Have a good week!