

The Chef's Table

THE FOODS AND FLAVORS *of Fall:* RECIPES FOR ROSH HASHANAH AND SUKKOT

By Helen Nash

Creamy Carrot Soup

8 servings

Silky and flavorful, this soup is one of my favorites. It is equally good served hot or at room temperature. Garnish it with thin strips of basil, if you like.

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 medium onion, coarsely chopped

3 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped

1 1/2 pounds carrots, cut into thin slices

1 1/2 pounds fresh tomatoes, peeled and seeded

1/2 cup tightly packed basil leaves, rinsed, not dried, plus some leaves for garnish

Helen Nash is the author of Kosher Cuisine (New Jersey, 1995) and Helen Nash's Kosher Kitchen (New Jersey, 2000). She lives in New York City.

5 cups chicken stock, or the equivalent in vegetable stock

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

Heat the oil in a large saucepan with a cover. Add the onion and garlic, and sauté for a few minutes. Add the carrots, tomatoes, basil and 4 1/2 cups of stock. Bring to a boil over high heat, reduce the heat, and cook covered until the carrots are very tender, about 30 minutes.

Cool a bit then puree, in batches, in a blender until very smooth.

Adjust the consistency with the extra 1/2 cup of stock if necessary. Season with salt and pepper.

Note:

This soup freezes well, but as it begins to boil, whisk it occasionally to bring back the creamy texture.

Balsamic Lentils



Balsamic Lentils

4 servings

The delicious and nutritious legume in this recipe does not require soaking before cooking. While French green lentils may not be easy to find, their shelf life is very long.

You can serve the dish warm, as an accompaniment to meat or poultry, or at room temperature, as an appetizer, with greens or salad.

1 cup Le Puy French green lentils
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 red or orange bell pepper
1 yellow bell pepper
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar, approximately
Kosher salt
1/4 cup loosely packed Italian parsley, finely chopped

Place the lentils in a saucepan. Add cold water to cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Lower heat to a simmer, and cook covered until tender, about 20 minutes. Drain, transfer to a bowl, and toss with 2 tablespoons oil.

In the meantime, preheat the broiler.

Halve the peppers, and seed them. Line the rack of a broiler pan with foil, and place the peppers on it skin side up.

Broil the peppers close to the heat source (approximately 6 inches) for about 6 minutes, until the skin is blistered and charred. Cover them with the foil to cool and to loosen the skin.

Skin the peppers, dice, and combine with the lentils. Season to taste with vinegar, salt and parsley.

Chicken Puttanesca

6 servings

This is a light, easy-to-prepare dish with a piquant flavor. The ingredients for this recipe are easily available.

6 medium to large boneless, skinless chicken breasts
3 tablespoons olive oil
Flour
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 ounce sun-dried tomatoes, coarsely chopped
14 ounces canned tomatoes (drain half of the liquid and crush half of the tomatoes by hand)
3 tablespoons capers
Tabasco sauce
Red pepper flakes

1 tablespoon wine vinegar, approximately
1/2 cup loosely packed Italian parsley, coarsely chopped, plus some for garnish

Preheat the oven to 400°.

Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a skillet. Pat chicken dry with paper towels. Spread flour on a sheet of wax paper; dip the dried chicken in flour, and shake off excess. Sauté the chicken over medium heat, on both sides, turning with tongs until just the outside is seared. Transfer to an ovenproof dish, and season with salt and pepper.

Add the remaining tablespoon of oil, and sauté the garlic over low heat until soft. Add sun-dried tomatoes, canned tomatoes, capers, Tabasco sauce and red pepper flakes. Bring to a boil, and season to taste. Pour the sauce over the chicken. Cover the chicken with heavy foil, and cook for 10-15 minutes, or until the chicken is lightly pink on the inside.

Season to taste with vinegar, and garnish with chopped parsley.

Spinach Turkey Burgers with Corn Salsa

6 burgers

This attractive dish can be made in advance and served either warm or at room temperature.

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, coarsely chopped
3 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
10 ounces fresh spinach, trimmed, rinsed and dried
1 whole egg, plus 1 egg white
1 pound ground turkey breast
3/4 cup instant oatmeal
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

Salsa:

6 plum tomatoes, skinned, seeded and coarsely chopped
1 1/2 cups fresh, uncooked corn kernels or frozen, thawed corn kernels
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar, approximately
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

Heat the oil in a skillet; add the onion and garlic, and sauté until soft.

Finely puree the onion mixture with the spinach and egg in a food processor fitted with the steel blade.

Place the turkey into a large bowl along with the oatmeal. Add the spinach puree, and combine very well. Season well.

Wet your hands, and form 6 patties.

Preheat the broiler.

Place the burgers on an oiled piece of foil, and broil 5 minutes on one side and approximately 4 minutes on the other, or until they are brown and cooked through.

Combine the salsa ingredients, season well, and keep warm.

Serve the burgers with or without the salsa.

Pine Nut Balls*

6 dozen cookies, approximately

These bite-size cookies remain fresh when stored in an airtight container in a cool place. Appropriate year-round, the recipe is ideal for Passover as well.

1/4 pound hazelnuts

1/2 pound blanched almonds

1/2 cup sugar

4 tablespoons unsalted margarine, at room temperature

Zest of 2 oranges

2 egg whites, lightly beaten with a fork

1/2 pound pine nuts

Preheat oven to 350°.

Roast hazelnuts on a baking sheet for about 10 minutes. The hazelnut skin should become blistered. Wrap the nuts in a towel and rub. Most of the skin will come off, but some will remain. Chop hazelnuts semi coarsely in a food processor fitted with a steel blade.

Place into a bowl. Repeat this with the almonds and add to the hazelnuts.

Preheat the oven to 400°.

Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

Add all the remaining ingredients (except the pine nuts) to the nut mixture, and combine well.

Roll flat teaspoons of the mixture into smooth balls in your palm. Place pine nuts in your palm and roll the balls again, pressing in the pine nuts so that they adhere well to the cookies.

Arrange the cookies on a baking sheets, and bake for 11 minutes, or until golden around the edges. Let cool for a minute, then slide a spatula under them to gently release them. Cool further on a wire rack.

*Some people have the custom not to eat nuts on Rosh Hashanah.

*Spinach Turkey Burgers
with Corn Salsa*