

Guest Blog Recipe

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Hoe Cakes with Savory Sour Cherry Chutney

Date: July 1, 2015

Cherry season, in this area, is fleeting and fickle. Cherries are a delicate fruit, prone to weather damage, and during their short peak period of ripeness (only a little more than two weeks!) they're prized pickings for birds and other pests. Any local cherries that make it to your fridge are a thing to be treasured.

So now that all of us CSA members have them, let's revel in cherry season. Let's wring every drop of local cherry possibility from these few short weeks. Of course, you can bake a cherry pie or make cherry ice cream. You can freeze them, can them, or dry them. Or you can do like we did and make a sour cherry chutney.

We began by slowly caramelizing Emanuel Stoltzfus's dashing candy onions, then added the cherries. To ballast their tartness we added a few spoonfuls of wildflower honey. We bolstered the savoriness with the copious addition of black pepper and fresh thyme. The result is a fruity spread that's sweet and sour, and a perfect compliment to cheese.

To make a dish of it, we spread it atop old fashion hoe cakes. These quaint little corn meal pancakes are said to have originated in the rural South. Farmers, the story goes, would heat the flat metal ends of their hoes in a fire and grease them up as impromptu griddles. They drizzled batter right on their searing farm tools to cook a quick lunch in the field. We finished the hoe cakes with some creamy Camembert, but goat cheese or blue cheese would work just as well.



Savory Sour Cherry Chutney

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Ingredients:

- 2 cups of sour cherries
- ½ medium onion, chopped (about ¾ cup)
- ¼ cup honey
- 3 Tbl of thyme leaves
- Fresh cracked black pepper to taste

Directions:

- Begin with the hardest part: pitting the cherries.
- Next, in a medium sauté pan, sweat the chopped onions in olive oil over medium heat until they begin to brown.
- Add the pitted cherries and bring to a simmer. Then add the honey. Feel free to use more honey if necessary to balance out the sourness of the cherries.
- Pick the thyme leaves from the stems and add them to the chutney. Crack a generous amount of black pepper into the sauce until it begins to taste rich and spicy.
- Continue to simmer the chutney until it has reduced to a jam-like consistency.



Hoe Cakes

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 cup coarse ground corn meal
- ½ cup flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 cup water

Directions:

- In a large mixing bowl, combine cornmeal, flour, salt and baking powder. Slowly whisk in the water (you can use milk instead if you prefer) until it resembles thick pancake

batter. Depending on the brand of flour and cornmeal you might have to add some extra liquid to get the right consistency.

- Let the batter rest for a few minutes to activate the baking powder and hydrate the cornmeal. Meanwhile, place a 10" skillet (or large-sized hoe) on medium heat and lubricate it with a small pad of butter.
- Ladle the batter into the hot skillet and spread around evenly with the bottom of the ladle. After bubbles begin to form around the hoe cake, flip it and cook the opposite side until brown. Repeat until all batter is used, this recipe should yield three large cakes.
- Next, using a jar lid, cut perfectly round, finger-food-sized pieces from the larger pancakes. Spread the chutney around the cakes and melt your cheese of choice on top using an oven set 400 F for approx. 5 minutes.

