

Growing Dinner

HOW ONE GROUP IS HELPING LOW-INCOME FAMILIES SAVE HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS BY TRADING GREEN LAWNS FOR SPRING'S LEAFY GREENS

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Recently there's been a boom in the number of people growing their own food in the U.S. One benefit for backyard gardeners, according to the National Gardening Association, is the return on investment: a well-maintained 600-square-foot food garden yields a \$500 return after considering costs and the average price of produce. Another benefit: great-tasting fresh vegetables to use in creative dishes, like this salad topped with prosciutto and beets (above) or the slightly spicy, creamy watercress soup (opposite).

Spring Salad with Beets, Prosciutto & Creamy Onion Dressing



Creamy Watercress Soup





Though it's beautifully delicate, mâche, also known as corn salad or lamb's lettuce, is so hardy it can survive through the winter and into the spring in many parts of the U.S. Here we combine it with mint and a tangy Meyer lemon dressing to top lamb burgers.

Lamb Burgers Topped with Mâche Salad

Lamb Burgers Topped with Mâche Salad

H X W H F H H

MAKES: 4 burgers

ACTIVE TIME: 30 minutes | TOTAL: 30 minutes

TO MAKE AHEAD: Refrigerate the dressing (Step 1) for up to 1 day. Cover and refrigerate the lamb mixture (Step 2) for up to 4 hours.

COST PER SERVING: under \$5

 Sweet and tart Meyer lemons add fragrant, floral notes to tender spring greens and herbs. These juicy lamb burgers are mounded with a generous portion of greens and sandwiched on a crusty bun. Serve with steamed new potatoes. **SHOPPING TIP:** Look for seasonally available Meyer lemons in late winter and early spring in well-stocked supermarkets and specialty grocers. Regular lemon works well as a substitute in this recipe.

- 4 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon lemon zest, preferably Meyer lemon (see *Shopping Tip*, above), divided
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice, preferably Meyer lemon
- 1 teaspoon honey, preferably orange-blossom honey
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon poppy seeds
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt, divided
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unseasoned dry breadcrumbs, preferably whole-wheat
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 pound lean ground lamb, preferably from the leg (see *Note*, right)
- 4 sandwich buns, preferably whole-wheat
- 4 cups mâche (lamb's lettuce) or coarsely chopped butterhead lettuce
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh mint leaves

1. Whisk oil, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon lemon zest, lemon juice, honey, mustard, poppy seeds, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt and pepper to taste in a large bowl. Set aside.

2. Combine breadcrumbs, chives, garlic, the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon lemon zest, the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper in a medium bowl. Add lamb and gently knead until combined. Form into 4 patties.

3. Coat a large nonstick skillet with cooking spray and heat over medium heat. Add the patties; cook until there is just a hint of pink in the center, 3 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate; tent with foil to keep warm.

4. Meanwhile, warm or toast buns, if desired. Add mâche (or lettuce) and mint to the bowl with the dressing; toss to coat. Place the lamb burgers on the buns and top with salad greens (a generous $\frac{3}{4}$ cup each).

PER SERVING: 343 calories; 12 g fat (3 g sat, 6 g mono); 73 mg cholesterol; 30 g carbohydrate; 4 g added sugars; 29 g protein; 5 g fiber; 732 mg sodium; 646 mg potassium. **NUTRITION BONUS:** Vitamin A (47% daily value), Zinc (36% dv), Iron (30% dv), Folate (24% dv), Magnesium (21% dv), Potassium (18% dv).

TIP: It can be difficult to find lean ground lamb, but it's easy to grind your own. Choose a lean cut, such as leg or loin, trim any excess fat and cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch pieces. Pulse in a food processor until uniformly ground, being careful not to overprocess. Or ask your butcher to grind a lean cut for you.

Spring Salad with Beets, Prosciutto & Creamy Onion Dressing

H X W H F H H

MAKES: 6 servings, about $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups each

ACTIVE TIME: 50 minutes | TOTAL: 50 minutes

TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate cooked beets (Step 2) for up to 2 days. Bring to room temperature before serving.

Tender mixed salad greens (mesclun) from the garden or farmers' market in spring are fabulous with nothing more than a simple vinaigrette. They can also form the foundation for a more elaborate salad as they do here with baby beets, crispy and salty prosciutto and a creamy dressing. (Photograph: page 64.)

- 1 teaspoon plus 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 4 very thin slices prosciutto (about 2 ounces)
- 1 bunch beets (about 12 ounces), preferably baby-size, stems and greens removed
- 1 medium sweet onion, sliced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon dried thyme
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup nonfat or low-fat buttermilk
- 2 tablespoons white-wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives
- 14 cups mixed salad greens

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Brush $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon oil over a large baking sheet. Cut prosciutto into 1- to $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch squares and place on the

baking sheet. Brush the prosciutto with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon oil. Bake until crispy, 5 to 7 minutes. Carefully transfer the prosciutto "chips" to a wire rack with a spatula. (If you leave them on the baking sheet, they won't be as crisp.)

2. Meanwhile, place beets in a large saucepan with enough water to cover by at least 2 inches. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to maintain a gentle simmer and cook until tender when pierced with a fork, 20 to 30 minutes. (If using larger beets, they will take up to 40 minutes.) Drain and let stand until cool enough to handle. Trim both ends of the beets and rub off the skins. Cut into wedges.

3. While the beets are cooking, combine onion with the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, thyme, salt and pepper in a small saucepan. Cover and cook over medium-low heat, stirring often, for 10 minutes. Uncover and continue cooking until the onion is very soft and caramelized, 8 to 10 minutes more. (If the onion begins to brown before it becomes very soft, add water 1 tablespoon at a time.) Remove from the heat, cover and let stand for 10 minutes.

4. Stir the onion, scraping up any browned bits. Set aside $\frac{1}{4}$ cup and transfer the remaining onion to a food processor or blender. Add buttermilk, vinegar, mayonnaise and chives; puree until smooth.

5. Toss salad greens, the reserved $\frac{1}{4}$ cup onion and the dressing in a large bowl. Divide among 6 plates. Top with the beets and prosciutto chips.

PER SERVING: 134 calories; 7 g fat (2 g sat, 3 g mono); 12 mg cholesterol; 13 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 6 g protein; 4 g fiber; 424 mg sodium; 601 mg potassium. **NUTRITION BONUS:** Vitamin A (71% daily value), Folate (51% dv), Vitamin C (43% dv), Potassium (17% dv).

Creamy Watercress Soup

H X W

MAKES: 4 servings, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups each

ACTIVE TIME: 40 minutes | TOTAL: 40 minutes

 Classic steakhouse flavors—horseradish, watercress and blue cheese—are combined in this pureed soup. The spicy, bold flavor of watercress pairs well with the rich flavor of beef, so we use beef broth as the base for the soup. Vegetable broth works, too, if you want to make a vegetarian version. (Photograph: page 65.)

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 small onion, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced

- 4 cups reduced-sodium beef broth or vegetable broth, divided
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 8 cups chopped watercress, any tough stems removed, plus 1/2 cup leaves for garnish
- 2 tablespoons shredded fresh horseradish (see Note, page 89) or prepared horseradish, or to taste
- 1/2 cup half-and-half
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 2 slices day-old sourdough bread, crusts removed, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons crumbled blue cheese (optional)

1. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and cook, stirring often, until the vegetables start to soften and brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Meanwhile, whisk 1 cup broth and flour in a small bowl until completely smooth. Set aside. Add the remaining 3 cups broth and salt to the pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to maintain a simmer and cook, stirring often, until the onion is very tender, about 5 minutes.

2. Stir chopped watercress into the pot and cook, stirring often, until tender, about 5 minutes. Stirring constantly, add the flour mixture and horseradish. Bring to a simmer and cook until thickened, 1 to 3 minutes.

3. Puree the soup in a blender in batches until smooth. (Use caution when pureeing hot liquids.) Return to the pot, stir in half-and-half and season with pepper; keep warm.

4. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a medium skillet over medium-low heat. Add breadcrumbs and cook, stirring often, until golden and crispy, 3 to 5 minutes.

5. Ladle soup into 4 bowls. Garnish with the breadcrumbs, watercress leaves and blue cheese, if desired.

PER SERVING: 223 calories; 11 g fat (3 g sat, 6 g mono); 16 mg cholesterol; 23 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 8 g protein; 2 g fiber; 716 mg sodium; 482 mg potassium. **NUTRITION BONUS:** Vitamin C (57% daily value), Vitamin A (46% dv), Folate (20% dv).

Grits & Greens Casserole

H X W H F

MAKES: 6 servings, about 1 cup each
ACTIVE TIME: 50 minutes | **TOTAL:** 1 1/4 hours
TO MAKE AHEAD: Prepare through Step 5, cover and refrigerate for up to 1 day. Bake at 400°F until bubbling, about 30 minutes.

Here we've combined two favorite southern side dishes—grits and greens—into one casserole; it's a natural choice to serve with Easter ham. Try omitting the bacon and using vegetable broth to make it a vegetarian dish.

- 4 slices bacon, chopped (optional)
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth or vegetable broth, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 16 cups chopped collard greens or kale, stems removed (about 1 large bunch, 1 1/2-2 pounds)
- 2 cups water, plus more as needed
- 1 cup grits (not instant)
- 3/4 cup shredded extra-sharp Cheddar cheese, divided
- 1/4 cup prepared salsa
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Coat an 8-inch-square baking dish with cooking spray.

2. Place bacon (if using) in a large Dutch oven. Cook over medium heat, stirring often, until crispy, 4 to 6 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon to a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Pour off the bacon fat.

3. Return the pot to medium-low heat; add oil, onion and garlic and cook, stirring often, until fragrant and starting to brown in spots, 2 to 8 minutes (cooking time will be quicker if you started with bacon). Add 1 cup broth and salt; bring to a boil over high heat. Add collards (or kale); stir until wilted down to about one-third the volume and bright green, 1 to 2 minutes. Cover, reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until tender, 18 to 20 minutes. Adjust heat during cooking to maintain a simmer, and add water, 1/4 cup at a time, if the pan seems dry.

4. Meanwhile, bring 2 cups water and the remaining 1 cup broth to a boil in a large saucepan. Pour in grits in a steady stream, whisking constantly. Bring to a simmer, whisking constantly. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, whisking often, until thick, about 5 minutes. Combine 1/2 cup cheese, salsa and egg in a small bowl. Remove the grits from the heat and quickly stir in the cheese mixture until combined.

5. Working quickly, spread about half the grits in the prepared baking dish. Top with greens, spreading evenly. Spread the remaining grits over the greens. Sprinkle with the remaining 1/4 cup cheese and the reserved bacon (if using).

6. Bake the casserole until hot and bubbling, about 20 minutes. Let stand for about 10 minutes before serving.

PER SERVING: 226 calories; 8 g fat (3 g sat, 2 g mono); 50 mg cholesterol; 31 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 11 g protein; 4 g fiber; 473 mg sodium; 335 mg potassium. **NUTRITION BONUS:** Vitamin A (134% daily value), Folate (66% dv), Vitamin C (60% dv), Calcium (26% dv).

Spinach & Frisée Salad with Tangerines & Coriander-Crusted Scallops

H X W H F

MAKES: 4 servings
ACTIVE TIME: 30 minutes | **TOTAL:** 30 minutes
COST PER SERVING: under \$5.50

Wow your guests with this pretty, easy-to-make dinner salad. We love how the flavors of coriander and tangerine complement the sweet scallops. Frisée has a big flavor and a sturdy texture, which stands up to the warm scallops. If you can't find frisée, make your own mix of greens; escarole and curly endive are great ones to include.

TANGERINE VINAIGRETTE

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon tangerine or orange zest
- 2 tablespoons tangerine or orange juice
- 4 teaspoons white-wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon minced shallot
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped spring herbs, such as chervil, chives, tarragon and/or dill
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

SALAD

- 6 cups baby spinach
- 6 cups torn frisée
- 2 tangerines or oranges, segmented (see Tip, right)
- 2 teaspoons coriander seeds
- 1/4 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 pound dry sea scallops (see Note, page 89), patted dry
- 1 tablespoon canola oil

1. **To prepare vinaigrette:** Whisk olive oil, tangerine (or orange) zest and juice, vinegar, shallot, herbs, mustard, salt and pepper in a medium bowl.

2. **To prepare salad:** Combine spinach, frisée and tangerine (or orange) segments in a large salad bowl. Add the vinaigrette and

toss to coat. Divide the salad among 4 plates.
3. Coarsely grind or chop coriander seeds and combine with kosher salt and pepper in a small bowl. Sprinkle on both sides of scallops. Heat canola oil in a large cast-iron or nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering but not smoking. Add the scallops and cook until they develop a golden brown crust and are just opaque all the way through, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Serve the scallops on the salad.

PER SERVING: 251 calories; 12 g fat (1 g sat, 8 g mono); 37 mg cholesterol; 15 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 22 g protein; 5 g fiber; 518 mg sodium; 949 mg potassium. **NUTRITION BONUS:** Vitamin A (126% daily value), Vitamin C (60% dv), Folate (55% dv), Magnesium (29% dv), Potassium (27% dv).

TIP: To segment a tangerine or orange: Remove peel and white pith, then slice off both ends. Use a sharp knife to cut the segments from the surrounding membranes.

Arugula Pesto

MAKES: about 1 cup, for 8 servings

ACTIVE TIME: 10 minutes | **TOTAL:** 10 minutes

TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 week or freeze in an ice cube tray. Transfer frozen cubes to a sealable plastic bag. Defrost as needed.

This pesto is a great way to use fresh, flavorful spring arugula. Try tossing it with pasta, spread it on pizza instead of tomato sauce or use it as the base for a vegetable dip. For the recipe in the photo (right), Roasted Spring Vegetables with Arugula Pesto, go to eatingwell.com.

- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 5 cups baby arugula
- 1/2 cup finely shredded Asiago cheese
- 1/4 cup toasted pine nuts (see *Tip*, page 89)
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

With the motor running, drop garlic through the feed tube of food processor; process until minced. Stop the machine and add arugula, cheese, pine nuts, oil and salt. Pulse and then process, scraping down the sides as necessary, until the mixture is a smooth paste.

PER 2-TABLESPOON SERVING: 121 calories; 12 g fat (2 g sat, 6 g mono); 6 mg cholesterol; 1 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 2 g protein; 0 g fiber; 143 mg sodium; 57 mg potassium.

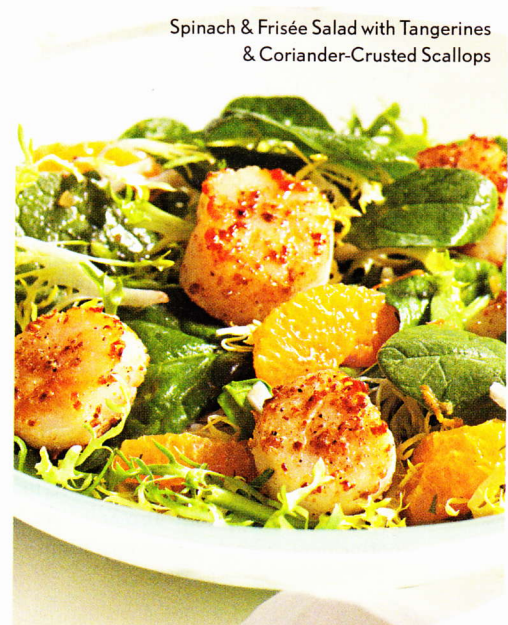
Once the heat of summer hits, many leafy salad greens start to flower and turn bitter, so take advantage of cooler spring weather to grow them. Here we use arugula to make pesto, which we've tossed with roasted spring carrots, potatoes and asparagus. Collard greens or kale are a healthy filling in this grits casserole (bottom left) and spinach and frisée salad is topped with seared scallops and tangerines (bottom right).



Roasted Spring Vegetables with Arugula Pesto



Grits & Greens Casserole



Spinach & Frisée Salad with Tangerines & Coriander-Crusted Scallops