



I Love to Eat Alien Invaders

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I, for one, never pass up the opportunity to chow down on alien invaders when the season's right. Toss them in a salad, spread them on toast, or stir them in my favorite soup for seasoning. I'm speaking of course of invasive plant species, like garlic mustard.

I found these recipes and couldn't help but thinking of you all. Though the peak of Garlic Mustard season is summer, you can still salivate over these awesome recipes provided courtesy of Kalamazoo Nature Center. Here's some quick information for identification.

Garlic Mustard is a biennial, sprouting and flowering over the course of two years.

Year 1: Seed grows into a rosette of kidney-shaped leaves with scalloped edges, these leaves can be dark purple to green and can be seen under the snow over winter.

Year 2: Tall flower stalks with triangular-shaped leaves with rough-toothy edges are topped by multiple, white 4-petaled flowers that form a cross.

Flowering Time: Late-April to June

Seed Dispersal: Plants have many long, slender pods that contain thousands of tiny seeds, which can be viable in the soil for up to 11 years.

Edible Parts: Leaves, flowers, roots and soft stems.

Hummus

- 6 cups canned or cooked and cooled garbanzo beans
- 5 cloves garlic
- 1/2 cup chopped garlic mustard
- 1/2 cup tahini sauce
- 1/2 cup lemon juice
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons cumin

Drain and place garbanzo beans in a food processor and puree with garlic and garlic mustard until

smooth. Scrape sides of processor with rubber spatula then continue to puree.

Add remaining ingredients while continuing to puree making a smooth paste for dipping. Serve chilled, with warm pita bread and/or fresh vegetables.

Wild Garlic Mustard and Potato Chowder

serves 6 to 8

1/4 lb. bacon, diced small (or 1 Tbsp unsalted butter or olive oil)
2 green onions, coarsely chopped
1/2 lb Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and diced small
4 cups wild garlic mustard leaves, soft stems and flowers (if any)
1 qt. light chicken broth
1 cup heavy cream (optional)
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 nice pinch of nutmeg

Clean the wild garlic mustard greens and keep wet in a bowl.

Heat a large pan, add the bacon and cook until crispy. Remove from pan, set aside. Discard the excess fat, then add the green onions, cover and sweat for 30 seconds. Add the garlic mustard greens (extra moisture shaken off) to the hot pan and cook until wilted. Add the diced potatoes; toss gently to mix well. Add the bacon and chicken broth. Season with salt, pepper and nutmeg

Bring to a boil then lower to a simmer. Cook until potatoes are tender. with a slotted spoon, remove 3 cups of the ingredients and puree the rest in a food processor, blender, or immersible blender. Add the reserved 3 cups back into the soup. Add the cream (optional), adjust the seasonings, if necessary, Bring to a boil, then simmer for another 10 minutes.

Serve with slices of toasted multi-grain bread. Garnish with fresh chopped garlic mustard or the flowers if available in season.

Fruited Bitter Greens

Serves 4-6

- 1 cup fresh or frozen sour cherries or chopped apricots
1 tablespoon sugar
3 cups sliced onions
2 bunches of chopped bitter greens (collards, kale, dandelion)
4 cups garlic mustard, chopped
Salt to taste.

Combine the fruit and sugar and set aside. Saute onions in oil until translucent. Add the chopped greens and garlic mustard in stages to the sauteed onions and cook until tender. Stir in fruit mixture and cook 3-5 minutes until tastes have come together. Serve as a vegetable or over pasta.

ENJOY!

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