

Turnip, Dulse, and Kalamata Olive Salad

Let's all be locavores. A locavore is a person who seeks out locally grown and prepared food. You're a locavore if you buy from local farmers, grow your own produce, or ask stores to carry more locally grown produce! Now that The New Oxford American Dictionary chose "locavore" as its 2007 word of the year, it won't be long before it's appearing on T-shirts: "Locavores, Not Wars!"

At the beginning of this year, maybe you've decided to become a locavore. Maybe you'd like to know more about the raw foods lifestyle, like where to start. Following is a list of foods from which raw vegans like to choose in order to make recipes (which is a more P.C. expression than the word "cook," involving high heat, which raw foodies shun, because high heat destroys digestive enzymes and causes harmful chemicals to form in food).

Leafy greens. Leafy greens make crisp salad fixings, tasty blended soups, green smoothies (when blended with bananas and berries), and convenient wraps of various shapes and sizes. You'll want spinach, collard greens, kale, escarole, turnip greens, bok choy, dandelion greens, lettuce (such as Romaine, Boston, red, and green leaf varieties), arugula, frisée, endive, chard, mustard greens, and any others you can find!

Other vegetables. There are many other vegetables to bring to your cutting board: radishes, cabbage, red and yellow bell peppers, tomatoes (plum, grape, cherry, and heirloom, for starters), scallions (also called green onions and bunching onions), sweet onions, red onions, celery, leeks, broccoli, cauliflower, turnips, corn, green beans, zucchini, yellow summer squash, butternut squash, cucumbers, artichokes (the hearts only), and small red potatoes (in certain recipes). Sea vegetables are a fabulous addition to your pantry, as they're loaded with nutrients and have a long shelf life. Raw ones include: nori (make sure the package doesn't say it has been toasted), dulse, kelp, wakame, alaria, sea lettuce, and laver.

Spices and herbs. To spice things up, herbs and spices are essential! Don't forget fresh basil, cilantro, parsley, the many varieties of hot peppers, garlic, shallots, ginger, turmeric, and any others you can find, like lemongrass, Kaffir lime leaves, lavender, fennel, dill, oregano, vanilla beans, and more. Raw foodies will also use dried herbs when fresh ones aren't available, like cinnamon, nutmeg, turmeric, cayenne, and others.

Fruit. When it comes to fruit, there are locally grown ones – if you're lucky to find them – like lemons, Meyer lemons, limes, key limes, grapefruit, pommelos, oranges (in many varieties), tangerines (have you ever eaten Satsumas?), carambolas, and avocado, plus strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, cranberries, mangos, papayas, bananas, fresh figs, watermelons, cantaloupes, honeydews, and other varieties. And from further away, apples (in so many varieties), plums, nectarines, peaches, pluots, kiwis, pears, Asian pears, pomegranates, persimmons. Exotic fruits can be harder to find, but it's worth the effort to track them down, such as: white sapotes, cherimoyas, young (Thai) coconuts, fresh dates (of many varieties), lychee nuts, and fresh durian.

Nuts and seeds. Raw nuts and seeds provide so much versatility in a raw chef's kitchen, for making ice cream, yogurt, cheese, and flour, and are delicious snacks alone or when spiced up. Keep nuts and seeds in your freezer until you're ready to use them. Then soak them in pure water for several hours, and drain before using them. You'll want walnuts, pistachios, Brazil nuts, filberts, pine nuts, pecans, macadamias, almonds (if you can even find raw ones since the USDA banned their sale), really raw cashews, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, flax seeds, hemp seeds, chia seeds, and poppy seeds.

Super foods. Finally, there are certain other super foodstuffs that can make all the difference between an everyday recipe and something really special. These include: tocotrienols powder (a raw rice bran product that's high in antioxidants and has a mildly sweet, malt-like flavor), maca, mesquite powder, dried Goji berries, raw cacao nibs, raw carob powder, sun-dried tomatoes, tamarind pods, bee pollen, spirulina, really raw agave nectar, and stevia, a high-intensity sweetener from the leaves of the stevia plant.

Equipment. Once you have an assortment of the above ingredients, you're ready to have some fun in the kitchen! If you're adventurous, you might want to try your hand at creating your own recipes. Or you might prefer to consult a raw recipe book. But there's some equipment you'll want to have. A power blender like Blend



Tec's Total Blender makes raw recipe-making easy, but you can get by with a regular blender plus a food processor and a juicer, which you will want anyway.

A spiralizer is very handy for turning certain vegetables into angel hair pasta, an ice cream maker can be essential, and a hammer and chisel is helpful for opening young coconuts.

Turnip, Dulse, and Kalamata Olive Salad, Serves 2

- 8 turnips and their greens, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin flaxseed oil
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 10 Kalamata olives
- 1/4 cup dulse sea vegetable, torn into small pieces
- Celtic salt, to taste
- Mix in large bowl and serve.

Local Note: In conjunction with a raw potluck, Craig B. Sommers, a naturopathic doctor and certified nutritionist, will give a talk in Sarasota on Wednesday evening, January 23 on "The Secrets of Longevity and Vibrant Health." For more information, visit www.rawfoods bible.com, or call Patty at 941-921-2401.

Judy Pokras is the editor and publisher of www.rawfoodsnewsmagazine.com and a consultant helping people transition to a healthier way of eating. See her ad on page 107. Send her raw foods news at vegwriter@aol.com for possible inclusion in this column.

