

# IN THE KITCHEN

with Olivia Mackay,  
www.scoffandquaff.wordpress.com

## NASU DENGAKU



Who knew eggplant could be so tasty?

### Ingredients

- 2 small eggplants or 4 Japanese eggplants
- 1/4 cup dashi (can also use vegetable stock to make it vegan)
- 2 tablespoons mirin

- 2 tspn sake
- 1 tspn sugar
- 2 tspn miso paste
- 1 tspn sesame seeds
- Spring onions to serve

## MARKET UPDATE

■ **Fruit:** Local strawberries and mangoes are of superb quality and the Brazilian fruit jaboticaba has begun its season. On the other hand, cumquats are now finished and limes are pricey.

■ **Veggies:** Asparagus is a great buy right now, especially cheap and delicious when bought locally. The price of pumpkin is rising dramatically as we exit winter and radishes are becoming scarce.

Courtesy of Murdoch Produce



It's Asparagus season!

## AT HOME WITH JOANNE BOWSKILL

**Cover girl Joanne Bowskill will be holding cooking lessons at this year's Concord Carnival. But these are no ordinary lessons... they are specially devised for chefs under the age of 12!**

**What inspired you to start cooking classes for kids?**

The visible loss of basic cooking skills, not only in children but in adults. Also, and very importantly, the growing obesity problem in Australia.

**Some adults can't cook - what can you expect from children in the kitchen?**

I have really high expectations of children's skills in the kitchen. With guidance and supervision, they are much more capable than we often give them credit for.

**What is the one recipe you are most grateful someone taught you to make?**

My mum's corn fritter recipe, as my seven-year-old son eats them every single day for breakfast.

**What makes a good recipe for children to learn?**

Clear and simple instructions with an outcome that the children will enjoy. Kids will most often try a recipe where they have been involved in choosing the recipe, selecting the ingredients and the preparation of the meal.

**How does learning to cook relate to reducing waste and looking after the environment?**

Reduction of packaging from pre-prepared foods is a big bonus. Knowing how to cook enables you to look through the food items you already have and create a dish, without having to go to the shops to buy new ingredients for each and every dish you want to produce. It's one of the greatest skills to have as a cook, in order to save money on your household bill and not have food constantly going to waste.

**What is your favourite play destination in the Inner West and what goodies do you take along?**

Timbrell Park in Five Dock. I like to take along a Picnic Cob, a recipe we will be demonstrating at the Concord Festival. This is a great sandwich loaf that can be made the day before, is easy to transport, and very tasty.

■ **You can book places at Joanne's free Get Kids Cooking in The Bay workshops at Concord Carnival at: [www.canadabay.nsw.gov.au/concord-carnival-concord-kitchen](http://www.canadabay.nsw.gov.au/concord-carnival-concord-kitchen) Concord Carnival is from 10am-4pm Sunday, October 11th at Greenlees Park.**

### RICOTTA GNOCCHI

#### Ingredients

- 500g ricotta
- ¾ cup plain flour and extra flour for bench
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ bunch chives
- Extra flour for bench



Kids in the kitchen

#### Method

1. Put 3 litres water in a large pot to boil
2. Finely chop chives
3. Place ricotta, flour, chives and salt in a bowl
4. Very gently mix together using your hands until just combined
5. Sprinkle flour on bench and tip ricotta mix onto it
7. Divide mix into 4 balls
8. Roll each ball into long narrow snakes
9. Cut snakes into 1cm long pieces
10. Gently drop gnocchi dough into boiling water
11. Once gnocchi floats to the top remove from water using a slotted spoon and place in bowl
12. Top with sauce, grated cheese, salt and pepper to taste

Serves 4

Adult help is needed for boiling and straining gnocchi, chopping chives



## WINE WITH WINSOR

www.wdwineoftheweek.blogspot.com

### Cracking red

#### Turkey Flat 2014 Butcher's Block

There is brilliant value to be found in this bold but beautifully balanced Barossa blend. A melange of shiraz, grenache and mataro grapes, it is a perfect choice for anyone who likes their reds with a hint of machismo. This is forward and fun and can either be enjoyed in its playful youth or comfortably cellared for a decade. Great with steaks or braises, this is a wine that blossoms when matched with food. \$20.



### Something new

#### Tyrrell's 2015 Part & Parcel

This is the first release of this eclectic white blend by Hunter Valley winery Tyrrell's, a blend of semillon, chardonnay, gewurztraminer and verdelho. It may be a cross-cultural blend but it works brilliantly, offering a fresh and aromatic bouquet and flavoursome intensity on the palate. This is a lovely, refreshing, low-alcohol wine (11 per cent), perfect for enjoying now the days are getting longer and warmer. This would be fabulous served chilled with oysters or cooked seafood dishes. \$25.



### Bargain basement

#### Foundstone 2014 Merlot

Berton Vineyards are making some cracking wines at Yenda in the Riverina. This is a blend of fruit from several different vineyards that tastes as good as many merlots costing double or triple the price. It is soft, juicy and plush, bigger than Beaujolais-style wines although with a similar youthful charm. Think plums and dark cherries with just a hint of oak nudging through. This would be excellent paired with earthy dishes featuring mushrooms or truffles. \$8-10.



## MELISSA LEONG

### Foraging your Backyard

This issue's theme is getting out and about in the Inner West now that the weather is starting to turn it on. From a food perspective, there's a lot to be thankful for. It isn't just about barbeques and picnics with friends in al fresco surrounds, either. When you are outside next, take a good look around. Chances are you are sitting on, or near, something that would do better on your plate than underfoot.

Foraging is not just a hipster term for seaweed garnishes on high-end restaurant menus, as much as it has become the theme du jour for the culinary set. It can also be anything salvaged from your landscape, from native berries and sea succulents, to seeds and greens. So for the newbie forager, where do you go and what are you supposed to look for?

Plants like warrigal greens, mallow and wood sorrel, for example, are abundantly available in parks through Wollie Creek, Glebe and Marrickville, even your own backyard. While they can be found in restaurants around town, they're often easier to use at home and a helluva lot cheaper, not to mention local. Paddock to plate, eat your heart out.

If you're unsure of what to look for, there are heaps of online resources to get you started. Self-proclaimed Weedy One, Diego Bonetto, is an expert on the subject of identifying wild edibles and not only is his website ([diegobonetto.com](http://diegobonetto.com)) a useful starting point for researching local wild food, but he also regularly takes groups of people foraging so you can learn firsthand what makes good grub.

Chef and wild food expert Clayton Donovan's young children have grown up on a diet of knowing what to eat from their surrounds. He laughs when he tells me about the time his kids set up a 'bush tucker' stand in the playground at school. He received a concerned phone call from the principal, worried that his kids might poison the other children (they didn't), and he noted that it was astonishing that five and six-year-olds could know more about wild foods than their educators. It's rare that we have this knowledge to pass down to our next generation, so why not discover foraging as a family?

This is the part of the article where I install the caveat that will prevent you from wanting to sue anyone: if in doubt, don't eat it. Proceed with caution and do your research, but don't forget to have a bit of fun in the discovery process.