

Splendid Summer*by Mary Matthews***Olivewood Gardens from Organic Vegetables to Delicious Meals**Posted on [June 25, 2012](#) by [splendidsummer](#)

Photo Courtesy of Olivewood Gardens and Learning Center — Credit lynnchi

When Sam Walton of Walmart fame's young grandson developed cancer, his son and daughter-in-law bought an 1896 Victorian home and planted organic gardens to provide organic, juiced vegetables to him. The child recovered from cancer and graduated from college in 2010. His mother, Christy Walton, generously donated the Victorian home and organic gardens for a teaching center. How awesome is that?

Everyone is talking about the increasing problem of childhood obesity. Olivewood Gardens is doing something about it! Their wonderful volunteers teach kids from every background imaginable about growing organic vegetables and creating sumptuous meals. Olivewood Gardens also hosts adult field trips and I'm lucky to be part of an organization that visited and dined:) Amy Cartensen of Olivewood Gardens granted permission to share recipes with you here:

Swiss Chard Strudels with Sundried Tomatoes, Golden Raisins, Pine Nuts, and Carmelized Onions***Created by Chef Amy Finley***

Makes 2 Strudels Serves 8

Ingredients

1 large onion, shredded
2tsp sugar
1/2 cup olive oil, divided
1 Tbsp oregano, chopped
1 Tbsp parsley, chopped
2 bunches Swiss chard, ribs removed, shredded into ribbons, then chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
3/4 cup vegetable broth
1/2 cup golden raisins

1/4 cup sundried tomatoes, julienned
1/4 cup cup pine nuts, toasted
10 sheets phyllo dough
1/4 cup parmesan cheese
1/4 cup panko bread crumbs
salt and freshly cracked pepper

Directions

1. Carmelize the onion with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil, the sugar, and salt and pepper to taste. When pale golden brown, add 2 teaspoons of the chopped oregano. Cook until amber. Set aside to cool completely.
2. On medium-high heat, saute the Swiss chard in 2 tablespoons of the olive oil until wilted. Add the chopped garlic and continue to cook 1 minute longer. Add the vegetable oil, the raisins, and sundried tomatoes. Cover and cook 2 minutes, then remove lid and cook until most of the liquid evaporates. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside to cool completely.
3. Puree the parsley and the remaining oregano with the remaining olive oil. Working with five sheets of book-folded panko at a time (cover the remaining sheets with a damp washcloth to prevent drying out), brush the individual sheets with the herbed olive oil and sprinkle with some of the panko and parmesan.
4. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
5. Turn a stack of prepared phyllo so that the long side is on the bottom and spread half the carmelized onions and half the Swiss chard along the edge, 1 inch up from the bottom. Sprinkle with half the pine nuts. Fold in the side edges and roll up the strudel fairly tightly. Transfer it seam side down to the parchment lined baking sheet, brush with herbed oil, sprinkle with parmesan and panko, and cut with a serrated knife into 8 portions, only cutting 3/4 of the way through the strudel. Repeat for remaining strudel. Bake for 25 minutes, until golden brown. Allow to cool 5-10 minutes, and then cut through the strudels to separate into pieces. Plate 2 pieces for each guest.

Roasted Romanesco Broccoli with Parmesan

Created by Chef Amy Finley

Serves 8 (as a side dish)

Ingredients

2-3 lbs. Romanesco broccoli, separated into florets with 1-2 inches stalk attached
2-3 Tbsp olive oil
salt and freshly cracked pepper
1/3 cup shaved parmesan

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Toss the broccoli with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Spread on a rimmed baking sheet and bake 20 minutes, until crisp-tender and beginning to brown.
3. Plate topped with a few wisps of shaved parmesan.

Olivewood Gardens rocks! Olivewood Gardens offers free public tours every Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.

About Olivewood Gardens

“Olivewood Gardens and Learning Center is an urban organic garden located in National City, California. The mission of Olivewood Gardens and Learning Center is to connect and motivate students and families from diverse backgrounds through organic gardening, environmental stewardship, and nutrition education, empowering them to be healthy and active citizens.”

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