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Around the Table
Chef's Apron

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More information the web at
www.susannye.com

Earth Day turns forty this week. That's the big Four-O. Earth Day was just one piece of the activism puzzle of the late '60's and early '70's. There was a lot going on so you might have missed some of those early environmental celebrations. I'm pretty sure I did.

I was in middle school at the time and there seemed to be a bunch of issues which were more challenging, exciting, interesting and tragic than recycling. (How's that for taking a complex set of issues and ideas and simplifying it down to a single problem?) The evening news was filled with stories about the Vietnamese War and the civil rights movement. Women were making more than a bit of noise about equal rights. There were demonstrations in the park and in the streets and sit-ins were common on college campuses. With all the upheaval, protest and change, the environmentalists were more or less outshouted. Besides, we'd already done our part. My mom had switched to non-phosphate detergent and our once proud whites were dingy.

When I was fourteen, maybe fifteen, I heard social activist and revolutionary Abbie Hoffman speak on the Boston Common. My sister was in high school. She either convinced our parents that it was a good idea or offered up some other excuse for the trip into town. I tagged along. Abbie spoke about the war, the revolution and the evils of capitalism. His speech was sprinkled liberally with words my mother didn't allow me to use. There was a good deal of cheering and chanting. It felt lot like a party and was terribly exciting. A trip to the dump for a lesson on sorting trash and recycling just couldn't compete.

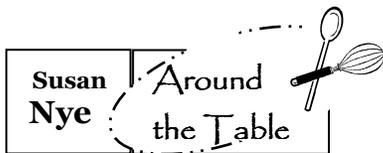
Surrounded by noisy and passionate causes, it was hard to pay attention to the environmentalists. Let's face it, they were scientists and too often seemed to speak a different language! But much has changed. The environmental movement is getting lots more attention and picking up momentum. Living Green has become a part of who we are. Think about it, I'll bet you practice at least one green act every day, probably more. We bring our own bags to the grocery store, insulate our houses and wear sweaters to cut down on fuel consumption, we recycle, buy energy efficient appliances and light bulbs and on and on and on. You probably don't do it all. I know I don't but we do what we can and what we can afford.

Maybe you've thinking that you'd like to do a bit more? Here are a few ideas to help you live a little greener and celebrate Earth Day:

Have you considered growing a kitchen garden? Earth Day is a great day to break ground. It's still a little early for most planting but you can prep the soil and begin some seedlings indoors. Not a farmer, then join a CSA (Community Sponsored Agriculture). Support a local farmer by signing-up on Earth Day for a summer full of wonderful fresh produce, dairy and meat. If you have trouble finding a CSA near you, check the list at www.LocalHarvest.org/csa. Not a joiner? Well then, how about you commit to do more of your shopping at local farm stands and farmers' markets.

Earth Day is an excellent excuse to get together with your neighbors for a clean-up. Roadside snow has melted, revealing plastic bottles, fast-food cartons and empty beer cans. Thank the earth by grabbing some trash bags, putting on your boots and gloves and scouring the neighborhood for the debris left by thoughtless litterbugs. After the clean-up reward yourself and your friends by continuing the celebration with a potluck. You don't need a famous speaker, a rally or a sit-in to bring people together for a good cause. It doesn't take a whole lot of effort, just a little bending and some enthusiasm. Add a few good friends, top it off with some delicious food and you've got a great day.

Bon appétit and enjoy!



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or just look like one!

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Fennel & Feta Salad

A colorful salad is a great way to celebrate spring and thank the earth. Enjoy!

Serves 6

2-3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Juice of 1/2 lemon
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 large bulb fennel, thinly sliced and cut in julienne
1 cucumber, peeled, seeded and chopped
1 yellow bell pepper, seeded and cut in julienne
4-6 radishes, finely chopped
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
1 tablespoon chopped fresh flat leaf parsley
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
4 ounces feta, crumbled
2 scallions, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons walnuts, chopped and toasted

Put the olive oil, lemon juice and garlic in a medium bowl; whisk to combine. Set aside and let the flavors combine while you chop the vegetables

Add the fennel, cucumber, bell pepper and radishes; season with salt and pepper; toss to combine.

Sprinkle with parsley and oregano and toss. Sprinkle with feta and garnish with scallions and walnuts and serve.