



# Our Wellesley Season & Bananas Foster

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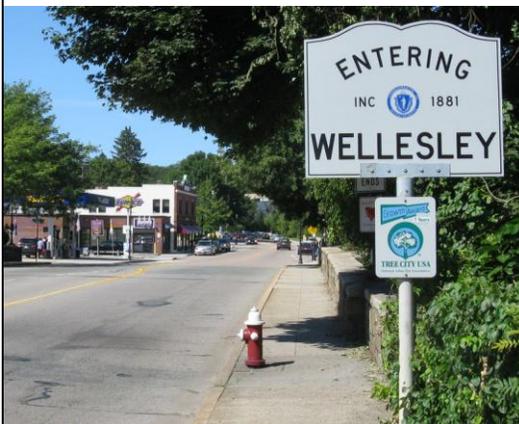
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I lived near San Francisco for a couple of years and found the weather a bit disconcerting. As far as I could tell, there were no seasons. Every day was like a sunny day in May, not too hot and with no humidity to speak off. (My curly locks were remarkably well behaved.) My friend



Julie is a California native. She insists that it takes a little time to adjust to her home State's subtle seasonal changes. I admit I never gave it a chance. As soon as I could, I fled the west coast and headed home to New England. There is nothing subtle about New England's seasons. (My curly locks agree and frequently misbehave).

We are now in what my mother used to call Our Wellesley Season. That's what she called April and May when we were kids. It sounds a little fancy like we had one of those big rambling cottages in the country and an elegant mansion in the suburbs. In reality we

had a little brown house in the New Hampshire woods and a nice but hardly Trump-like home in the suburbs of Boston.

Massachusetts was where we went to school and worked. New Hampshire was where we played. We spent as much time as we possibly could there. The end of the school year bell was still ringing when our station wagon hit the road and headed north to Pleasant Lake. When school started again in September we barely made it back for homeroom the first day. Throughout the fall and winter, all of our weekends and vacations were spent enjoying New Hampshire's hills.

But here's our guilty confession. As much as we all loved it, every spring we deserted the Granite State. Forget for better or worse. Fickle flatlanders, we kept our distance when April showers and melting snow turned the hills and fields into a muddy mess and the lake was cold and gray. It's easy to love New Hampshire when it's bright green, brilliant red and gold or sparkling white with snow. Even this year, when winter was remarkably short and mild, it's clear why we stayed away. Spring is very slow in coming. Except for a few brave clumps of bright purple crocuses, everywhere you look, it's a drab gray or brown.

That's not to say that Boston's suburbs were always clear and sunny. April showers were commonplace but, unlike New Hampshire, April snowstorms were few and far between. I remember more than a few boring, rainy Saturday afternoons. However, there was a movie theatre in town, the television got more than one fuzzy station and the ice cream parlor was open year-round. Suburban roads were paved and our driveway was not lost in a sea of mud. Long before the snow banks melted in front of our little brown house in the woods, our garden in Wellesley was filled with cheery daffodils and tulips. Furthermore, marauding deer did not plow through those blooms like a pack of starving tourists at an all-you-can-eat Atlantic City buffet.



Now that I live in New Hampshire year-round, I have no Wellesley to escape to during Wellesley Season. (I did spend a few hours in Manchester yesterday but I don't think that counts.) Truth be told, I don't miss suburbia. However, a trip to the big city (any big city will do but preferably someplace warm) or a tropical island might be nice right about now!

Bon appétit!



*Another recipe from Susan Nye: Early Spring 2012/Volume 291*

## Bananas Foster

*If someplace warm isn't in your travel plans this spring, a traditional New Orleans dessert will cheer you up after one too many gray days. Enjoy!*

Serves 4

4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
1/4 teaspoon allspice  
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
2 bananas, peeled and cut on the diagonal in 1/2-inch slices  
1/4 cup dark rum  
Vanilla ice cream  
Chopped pecans, toasted

Melt the butter in a heavy skillet over low heat. Add the brown sugar, allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt and stir until the sugar dissolves. Raise the heat to medium-high and bring to a simmer. Add the bananas and cook for 2-3 minutes, carefully spooning the sauce over the bananas.

Remove the pan from the heat and add the rum. Ignite the rum, return the pan to the heat and continue cooking, swirling the sauce, until flame dies out and the sauce is syrupy, 1-3 minutes.

To serve: scoop vanilla cream into individual dessert bowls. Gently spoon the warm bananas and sauce over and around the ice cream, garnish with toasted pecans and serve immediately.

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