

Schreiber & Sons CSA

It's a Culinary Adventure

Schreiberandsons.com

September 28, 2009

Week XXII (only 6 weeks left)

In this week's box, from your farmer you can expect:

- Tomatoes
- Bell pepper
- Watermelon for large/medium, other melon for small
- Carrots
- Cardoon
- Blue, red, white or Yukon Gold for organic; Russet Burbank potatoes for conventional
- Green onions
- Farmers choice
- Italian peppers
- Squash

What to Expect. If everything goes right, next week you should get Brussels sprouts in yours. Also, next week will be our official kick off for fall. We had our harvest party. It is October, you need to start getting your fall produce. So exactly what is fall produce... wait and see (think pumpkins and squash). I expect next week will be the last for eggplant, it might be possible we will get it to you a two more times, but count on only one more portion.

Cardoon. This week is cardoon week. I am not sure if I am excited or worried about your reactions to cardoon. Below we have included some information on this rather unusual crop along with several recipes.

Surplus produce. We have surplus potatoes, eggplant, carrots, green onions and peppers.

Meat. Following is our meat inventory. If you are interested in a meat order, let us know. Rump Roasts (2), Rib Steaks (15), Soup Bones (2), Beef Top Round (9), Chuck Roasts (11), Bottom Round (10), Sirlion (3), Sirlion tip (3), Tenderlion (3) and lots and lots of hamburger.

What going on at the farm. The big news for us is the cooling off of the weather. The first thing this means is that the we are greatly reducing our irrigation. Melon harvest is over-there are no more melons to be harvested, but as you will notice in your boxes there are melons in storage. I was surprised at how many melons came off late, so I promise you-with one possible exception later in the season, this is the last of the melons. It is supposed to be in the mid thirties this week for the low one night with the rest of the nights in the forties. That is a big deal for some crop, that spells the end of the eggplant, it will like stop the squash from growing or will slow it down greatly. Other hot weather crops, such as peppers will virtually stop growing. Also, it means that any crops that are not close to harvest time will have a hard time making to a suitable stage to pick. We also have a lot of crops that are close to harvest but do not make it.

We are starting to pick crops and bring them in for storage or to dry. Among the things we are picking to dry and store are hot chilli peppers and herbs. Next week we will start harvesting things like winter squash and pumpkins. The gourds still need some time to hardened up. Picking them (and squash) to early will result in them going bad too soon.

Your Farmer

Alan Schreiber

The **cardo**n (*Cynara cardunculus*), also called the **artichoke thistle**, **cardone**, **cardoni**, **carduni** or **cardi**, is a [thistle](#)-like plant which is member of the [Aster](#) family, [Asteraceae](#); (or archaic: Daisy family, [Compositae](#)). It is a naturally occurring variant of the same species as the [Globe artichoke](#), and has many cultivated varieties. It is native to the Mediterranean, where it was domesticated in ancient times.

The earliest description of the cardoon comes from the fourth century BCE Greek writer [Theophrastus](#). The cardoon was popular in Greek and Roman cuisine. Cardoons remained popular in medieval and early modern Europe, and were common in the vegetable gardens of colonial America. They fell from fashion only in the late nineteenth century. In Europe, Cardoon is still cultivated in [Provence](#), [Spain](#) and [Italy](#). In the

[Geneva](#) region, where [Huguenot](#) refugees introduced it about 1685, the local variety *Cardy* is considered a culinary specialty.

Cardoon stalks can be covered with small, nearly invisible spines that can cause substantial pain if they become lodged in the skin. Several "spineless" cultivars have been developed to overcome this but care in handling is recommended for all types.

While the flower buds can be eaten much as the artichoke, more often the stems are eaten after being [braised](#) in cooking liquid. Battered and fried, the stems are also traditionally served at [St. Joseph's altars](#) in [New Orleans](#).

The stalks, which look like large celery stalks, can be served steamed or braised. They have an artichoke-like flavor. Cardoons are available in the market only in the winter months. In the U.S.A., it is rarely found in stores, but available in farmers' markets, where it is available through May, June, and July. The main root can also be boiled and served cold. Acclaimed chef [Mario Batali](#) calls the cardoon one of his favorite vegetables and says they have a "very sexy flavor."

Cardoons are used as a vegetarian source of [enzymes](#) for cheese production. In [Portugal](#), traditional coagulation of the [curd](#) relies entirely on this vegetable rennet. This results in cheeses such as the [Nisa](#) (D.O.P.), with a peculiar earthy, herbaceous and a slightly citric flavour that bears affinity with full-body or fortified wines.

Cardoons are also an ingredient in one of the national dishes of Spain, the [Cocido Madrilen](#), a slow-cooking, one-pot, meat and vegetable dinner simmered in broth, cardoons are traditional in the cocidos of Madrid.

Cardoon requires a long, cool growing season (ca. 5 months) but it is frost-sensitive. It also typically requires substantial growing space per plant and hence is not much grown save where it is a regional favorite.

The cardoon is highly [invasive](#) and is able to adapt to dry climates. It has become a major weed in the [pampas](#) of [Argentina](#) and [California](#); it is also considered a weed in [Australia](#).

Cardoon has attracted recent attention as a possible source of [biodiesel](#). The oil, extracted from the seeds of the cardoon, and called [artichoke oil](#), is similar to [safflower](#) and [sunflower oil](#) in composition and use.

Cardoon Gratin

serves 3-4 as a side dish

1 bunch cardoons
1/2 lemon, juiced

1 teaspoon kosher salt

bechamel

1 Tablespoon butter

1 Tablespoon flour

1 cup milk

pinch of nutmeg

salt to taste

1/4 cup parmesan cheese

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Trim the ends of the cardoons and peel the stringy fibers using a paring knife or vegetable peeler. Remove all leaves. Cut into 2 inch lengths and boil in a large pot of boiling salted water with lemon juice added. Cook for 30-45 minutes or until almost tender.

Make a bechamel sauce by heating the butter and flour in a small saucepan and cooking and whisking to remove lumps, until smooth and just beginning to smell toasty, though not brown. Add the milk and whisk vigorously. Cook until thick, about 5 minutes. Add the nutmeg and salt to taste.

In a greased baking dish place the cardoons in one layer. Top with the sauce and sprinkle on the cheese. Bake for 10-15 minutes or until bubbly.

Golden Fried Cardoon

- Recipe by **Grace Parisi**

Cardoons have a rich artichoke flavor with a hint of lemon. My grandmother served them prepared this way right alongside the candied yams and turkey for Thanksgiving.

- **SERVINGS: 4**

Ingredients

1. 2 quarts water
2. 2 tablespoons white vinegar
3. 4 large cardoon ribs (1 pound), ends and leaves trimmed
4. 2 large egg yolks beaten with 1 tablespoon water
5. 1 large egg, beaten
6. 1 cup homemade dry bread crumbs
7. 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
8. Salt and freshly ground pepper
9. Vegetable oil, for frying

10. Lemon wedges

Directions

1. In a bowl, combine the water and vinegar. Using a vegetable peeler, remove the tough outer strings of the cardoon ribs. Cut the ribs into 2-inch lengths, adding them to the vinegar water as you work. Drain the cardoon ribs, transfer them to a large saucepan of lightly salted water and boil until very tender, about 30 minutes. Drain and pat dry; let cool.
2. In a shallow bowl, combine the egg yolks and egg. In another bowl, toss the crumbs with the Parmesan, 1/2 teaspoon of salt and 1/8 teaspoon of pepper. Dip the cardoon in the eggs, then dredge in the crumbs, pressing to help them adhere. Shake off any excess and set the cardoon on a wax paper-lined tray.
3. In a medium skillet, heat 1/2 inch of vegetable oil over moderately high heat. When the oil is very hot, add the cardoon, 5 or 6 pieces at a time, and fry until golden and crisp, about 1 1/2 minutes per side. Transfer the cardoon to a wire rack set over a baking sheet. Sprinkle lightly with salt and serve hot or at room temperature with lemon wedges.

Ingredients / Serves 8

- A medium size cardoon plant (1 kg - 2 1/4 lb)
- 3 eggs
- 2 young fresh onions, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- 4 tablespoons dried chives
- 1 teaspoon dried bay leaves
- 250 g (8 1/2 oz) breading mixture
- 750 ml (27 fl oz - 3 1/2 C) puréed tomatoes
- A glass of white wine
- 250 g (8 1/2 oz) mozzarella cheese, grated
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt

- Time:
preparation: about 60 minutes
cooking: about 90 minutes
- Difficulty:
medium difficulty
- **Nutrition Facts (amount per serving):**
Calories: 295 (kCal) - 1235 (kJ)
Protein: 12.5 (g)

Total fat: 13.6 (g)
Total carbohydrate: 30.6 (g)
Sugars: 5.4 (g)

Cardoon Pie

Clean and wash all the stalks of the cardoon and steam them until tender.

Let them cool and then cut them into 6-8 cm (2 1/2 - 3 1/4in) pieces.

Beat the eggs with 2 tablespoons dried chives and a pinch of salt.

Preheat oven to 200°C (400°F). Dip every cardoon piece into the beaten eggs and then into the breading mixture. Add some milk to the beaten eggs only if they aren't enough.

Oil some baking pans with 1 tablespoon olive oil and arrange the cardoon pieces on them. Bake until the surface is golden. Remember to turn upside down the cardoon pieces during the cooking.

Meanwhile prepare the sauce. Place the puréed tomatoes together with the wine, onions, parsley, bay leaves and the remaining of dried chives in a pan. Season to taste with salt and cook on medium heat. Don't let the sauce reduce too much. Switch off the gas, add the remaining olive oil (3 tablespoons) and stir.

Preheat oven to 180°C (350°F). Spoon some tomato sauce on the bottom of a deep baking pan. Arrange the cardoon pieces and cover with the sauce; sprinkle with the grated mozzarella. Keep on alternating the cardoon pieces with the sauce and mozzarella. Complete with the tomato sauce and mozzarella. Bake until the mozzarella melts and the surface is golden.

Cardoon Salad

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS:

1 stalk Cardoon

1/4 cup Italian parsley, finely chopped

1 Meyer lemon, juiced

2 Cloves of garlic chopped

1/3 cup Olive oil

Pecorino cheese for garnish

Salt & pepper to taste

PREPARATION:

Clean cardoon and remove outer skin with a damp towel. Place clean cardoon in acidulated water (water with lemon juice) to keep from browning. Slice cardoon on bias into 1 inch pieces. Blanch cardoon in a pot of salted boiling water until tender. Strain cardoon under running cold water. Place cardoon in iced water to stop cooking process. When cardoon has cooled, strain from iced water and drain for at least 30 minutes. Mix together parsley, lemon juice, garlic & olive oil & marinate cardoon for 20 minutes. Plate & garnish with Pecorino cheese.

Cardoon Soup Recipe - Minestra di Cardi in Compagnia

Cardoon Soup, or Minestra di Cardi in Compagnia: Cardoons are a simple vegetable, and this is a tasty cardoon soup.

Prep Time: :45

Cook Time: :25

Ingredients:

- 1 pound (400 g) tender white cardoons
- 8 ounces (200 g) ground pork
- 6 ounces (150 g) chicken livers
- 2 handfuls freshly grated pecorino (or use the mildest romano you can find)
- 2 egg yolks
- A half a lemon
- 2 quarts broth
- Extravirgin olive oil
- Salt & pepper to taste

Preparation:

Wash the cardoons, stripping out the fibers on the backs of the stalks (grasp them and pull as you would if you were stripping the fibers out of celery) and trimming away the woody hearts of the larger stalks. Rub them with the lemon, chop them, and boil them until the pieces are fork-tender in abundant salted water.

Clean the chicken livers, trimming away and discarding the gall bladders (be careful

not to puncture them). Chop the livers and sauté them in olive oil, seasoning them with a pinch of salt.

Mix the ground pork with a handful of the grated cheese, the yolks, and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Make small meatballs out of the mixture, put them in a pot with just enough broth to cover, and simmer them for about 10 minutes.

Bring the remaining broth to a boil. Add the cardoons, meatballs in their broth, and chicken livers, and continue simmering for 15 minutes more. Serve with grated pecorino on the side.

The wine? White -- cardoons aren't as problematic as artichokes, but they are of the same family, and display that slightly metallic bitterness to a lesser degree.

Meat with Cardoons - Moroccan Recipe for Meat and Cardoon (Khorchou

Cardoon (*khorchouf* in Arabic) looks like giant celery, but when cooked the stalks taste a bit like artichokes. If you've never eaten cardoon, this tagine recipe is a great one to try. Cardoons and meat are cooked with ginger, turmeric, salt, pepper and preserved lemon to yield a slightly tangy, peppery, and very tasty Moroccan dish.

See [How to Clean Cardoon](#)¹ to prepare the stalks for cooking. This can be done several days in advance.

Cardoon takes quite a long time to cook, so using a pressure cooker is recommended.

Serves 4 as a main dish.

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour, 20 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. (about 1/2 kg) meat, cut into 3- or 4-inch pieces
- 1 large bunch of cardoon, pared and cleaned
- 1 onion, chopped medium
- 3 cloves of garlic, finely chopped or pressed
- 1 tomato, grated
- 1/3 cup olive oil

- 2 teaspoons ginger
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 3/4 teaspoon pepper
- 3/4 teaspoon turmeric (or 1/8 teaspoon Moroccan colorant)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1 preserved lemon, cut into quarters
- handful of red olives, rinsed

Preparation:

Set aside the cleaned cardoon, olives and preserved lemon.

Mix the meat with the remaining ingredients in a pressure cooker. Cook over medium heat, uncovered, for about 10 minutes, stirring several times to brown the meat on all sides.

Add the cardoons and about 3 cups (1 1/2 liters) of water, and cover the pressure cooker. Turn the heat up to high until pressure is achieved.

Reduce the heat to medium, and cook with pressure for 1 hour. Release the pressure, and check the cardoons to see if they are tender – you should be able to pinch the cardoon pieces in half.

If the cardoons need additional cooking, remove the meat to a plate and cover. Add a little water to the pressure cooker if necessary (the liquids should be level with the cardoons) and continue cooking on pressure until the cardoons are tender. This could take an additional 30 minutes if the cardoon stalks were quite large.

When the cardoons have fully cooked, return the meat to the pot. Add the olives and preserved lemon, and simmer uncovered to reduce the sauce until it is thick and well below the level of the cardoons.

Transfer the cardoons, meat and sauce to a large platter or tagine, and serve with crusty bread.

