



## Journey through Thyme

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Columnist

### Cooking keeps us busy in stressful times

With health and government officials urging people to stay home in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, many people are looking for productive and comforting ways to pass the time indoors — prompting the reawakening of cooking and baking.

With more people working from home, nutritionists say now is the time to start cooking and brushing up on your culinary know-how.

Cooking can be a comfort and one way to reduce anxiety during trying times. If you're at home, cooking is a way to nurture yourself and learn a new skill and stay active. It's also therapeutic because when you're following a recipe, you put your brain to work and you're focusing on that instead of thinking about the other worries you may have.

Baking or cooking can be a stress reliever, because you're using all five of your senses, which puts you present and in the moment.

There is power in food. There's a blessing in food, especially at a time like this. Create that feeling that makes the best of a crisis. Get cooking.

Turn to soups for comfort with a big pot of chicken soup with fine noodles, carrots, celery, onions, and parsley, just like mom made, and it's good for you.

What are the best foods to buy when you know you're going to be stuck at home? You can make nutrition a priority, and that's all the more important if your immune system may be compromised.

When you go to the grocery stores you need a game plan of what can bring you the most nutrition. Fresh foods can be frozen, which will allow you to enjoy them later.

Reach for beans and legumes because they're long-lasting and also a great starting point for a nutrient-rich meal. Chickpeas or lentils, for example, can be mixed with salads and pasta dishes, or used in soups and stews. They can also be used for making homemade hummus, a great snack. You should also stock up on quinoa, barley, ground cornmeal for polenta or grits, pasta sauces, and pasta.

Baking staples would include all-purpose flour, white sugar, brown sugar, baking powder and soda, salt, butter and yeast. Also keep stocked up on eggs, for baking and other uses, as well as oils, such as olive and

vegetable, oatmeal and dried fruits that can be turned into granola, along with some nuts and seeds. A freezer can be loaded with proteins, frozen vegetables and broth, as well as frozen fruits for smoothies and for baked items such as muffins.

Try to stay away from highly-processed snacks, which can be an easy option when you have a cupboard stocked with biscuits, crackers, and chips, and especially when you are home all day, watching the latest updates on the pandemic and feeling stressed.

Instead, stock up on apples, oranges, lemons and bell peppers, all of which are high in vitamin C, which helps build a strong immune system. In between meals, healthy snack options include low-fat popcorn and nuts.

During this time, it's likely that you'll have some more free time on your hands than normal. So, if you're used to cooking at home, why not use it as an opportunity to try your hand at a few recipes that you wouldn't normally be able to.

One way to eat healthy all week is to practice making

*See COOKING on page 18*



## Campgrounds, preserves closed

To support state and local measures directing people to stay home to save lives, all Deschutes National Forest campgrounds are now closed through May 8, or until such measures are lifted.

The campground closures are necessary to address the social distancing guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and to align with Governor Brown's "Stay at Home" executive order, the Forest Service states.

Day use areas, including trailheads, will remain accessible, however restroom facilities will not be serviced. The Forest Service encourages the public to follow the Governor's executive order for the State of Oregon. The executive order says to stay home and to not travel for recreational purposes.

"Deschutes National Forest officials urge people to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and avoid putting undue pressure on medical and law enforcement personnel in Central

Oregon communities so all can return to our outdoor adventures soon.

The Deschutes Land Trust has closed its preserves and all associated trails, trailheads, and parking areas to the public to comply with the governor's "Stay Home, Save Lives" executive order 20-12.

The closure will continue until further notice.

"The Deschutes Land Trust's Preserves are privately owned and managed for wildlife and to protect important natural resources, but wherever possible we seek to provide appropriate public access. We recognize that the public wants to get out to explore and experience nature, particularly at a time when many of us are feeling cooped up at home. However, in light of this unprecedented public health emergency,

"we concluded it was important to close public access," said Brad Chalfant, executive director of the Deschutes Land Trust.

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