



TRASH TALK

GRETCHEN STADLER

Visitor helps open eyes to benefits of recycling

Back in the mid 1980s a distant cousin of mine from Germany came to the US for a summer visit. David enjoyed the the West Coast beaches and the city sights, but he was shocked that we did not have a national recycling system in place. He watched in disbelief as I put a glass mayonnaise jar into the trash. This was my first real introduction to the idea of waste management. Yes, as a kid I had saved newspapers for the drive at my elementary school and turned in pop bottles for change so I could buy Snickers bars, but I had no real understanding about garbage or recycling. That single experience with my cousin was the real start of my waste reduction education.

After David returned to Berlin, I learned where my city's recycling center was and what materials they would accept. I set up recycling bins in my apartment and with these baby steps my messy adventure began.

I am still learning to embrace the messiness of waste reduction and moving forward step by step to reduce, reuse and recycle. Some steps are easier. Collecting my recyclable materials and dropping them off at Baker Sanitary Service. Keeping reusable shopping bags in my car. Drinking coffee in a travel mug and water from a reusable bottle.

Some steps are a little more challenging. Learning about composting. Buying bulk spices and staples using my refillable canisters.

Remembering to take my reusable bags out of the trunk and into the grocery store with me every time!

See [Recycling](#) / Page 2B



DORY'S DIARY

DOROTHY SWART FLESHMAN

A horse I never met is real to me just the same

It's funny how something in the past stays in the future without the real presence of the thing that first brought it about.

In this case it is my Uncle Bob and his horse Dan.

I never saw Dan, rode him or even pet or fed him a carrot, but he became real to me all through my youth.

The idea of him comes to me yet because of a piece of fire irons. It is unusually made but I like the Webster dictionary's definition in that it is a "grasping device consisting commonly of two pieces joined at one end by a pivot or hinged like scissors."

The thing about this piece is that it is one of a kind. I never use it because I no longer have an open-burning fireplace and probably wouldn't use it if I did.

I've not been able to give or throw it away because it is part of my past that I've not yet been able to let go.

To hear my Uncle Bob tell about it, he had been one of the great cowboys in his day and his favorite working horse was Dan, a beautiful sleek roan with a mind and temper of his own.

See [Dory](#) / Page 2B

ASPARAGUS IDEAS

By Genevieve Ko
Los Angeles Times

I have a binder full of clipped Culinary SOS columns. Some have faded, some are spattered with oil, all have my notes in the margins. This column taught me how to cook and gave me a taste of Los Angeles restaurants at home. I hope this revival of it will do the same for you.

We're keeping it the same at its core: Write in and ask us at cooking@latimes.com to get you the Southern California restaurant recipes you want. We'll track them down, adjust them to home kitchens in quantities, ingredients, techniques and tools, and publish the tested recipe along with your request. But we're expanding it too: Call us — SOS! — with any cooking help you need. Our answers may be through recipes, tutorials or both.

To start, here's a question from Karen Ng in Brentwood, Calif.: I see all this amazing asparagus at the farmer's market! I usually just roast it with oil, salt and pepper. It's delicious that way, but what else can I do with it?

Here are three different takes from three great chefs. Two are new menu items and one is a longtime family favorite.

Kuniko Yagi of Pikuniko in the Row DTLA shares the steamed asparagus dish her mom made in Japan each spring. Ponzu-soaked grated daikon radish tops the asparagus as a condiment, as does a flurry of togarashi spice and chopped nori.

Keith Corbin of Alta Adams remembers, "Daniel (Patterson) and I first made this asparagus and green garlic dish together when I was staging at the Coi kitchen prior to the opening of Alta Adams." While the sum of all the parts is spectacular, the chilled asparagus is also wonderful with only the green garlic mayonnaise or the vinaigrette.

Jason Mattick, chef de cuisine of Broken Spanish, gives us asparagus tostadas with a sauce that mashes up chermoula and salsa verde.

STEAMED ASPARAGUS WITH TANGERINE PONZU, DAIKON AND NORI

15 minutes. Serves 4 to 6.

- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon organic tamari or soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon rice wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon fresh tangerine (or orange) juice
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons mirin
- 1 bunch (about 1 pound) asparagus
- 1 piece (5 inches) daikon radish (about 10 ounces), peeled
- Togarashi and chopped roasted seasoned nori, to garnish

1. Prepare a steamer.
2. Make the ponzu by mixing the tamari, vinegar, tangerine juice, lemon juice and mirin in a small bowl.
3. Trim the bottom 3 inches off the asparagus. Place in the steamer, cover, and steam, turning occasionally to ensure even cooking, until bright green and just tender, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a serving plate.
4. Meanwhile, grate the radish on the small holes of a grater or against a ginger grater into a fine-mesh sieve. Squeeze the radish with your hands to remove all excess liquid. Scatter the daikon over the asparagus, then drizzle the ponzu directly over the daikon.
5. Sprinkle togarashi all over the asparagus and daikon and top with nori. Serve



Brian van der Brug/Los Angeles Times-TNS

Asparagus with green garlic aioli and egg salad from Alta chef Keith Corbin at the West Adams restaurant in Los Angeles.

immediately.

Make Ahead: The ponzu can be refrigerated for up to 1 week.

Note: Adapted from Kuniko Yagi of Pikuniko

GRILLED ASPARAGUS TOSTADAS WITH CHARRED TOMATILLO CHERMOULA

1 1/2 hours, plus pickling overnight. Serves 4 to 6.

Assemble the tostadas completely or set up a bar for friends and family to put together on their own.

- 2 bunches (2 pounds) asparagus, trimmed
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Charred Tomatillo Chermoula (see recipe below)
- Serrano Aioli (see recipe below)
- 8 tostada shells
- 2 ounces goat cheese or cotija, crumbled
- Hibiscus Pickled Onions (see recipe below)
- Fresh herbs, such as cilantro, dill, purslane and borage, to garnish

1. Build a medium-hot fire in a charcoal grill or heat a gas grill to medium-high (alternatively, heat a grill pan over medium-high heat). Drizzle the asparagus with just enough olive oil to lightly coat (about 1 tablespoon) and sprinkle with salt. Grill, turning to evenly char, until bright green and almost tender, 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board and cut into 1-inch lengths at an angle. Transfer to a bowl with the chermoula and gently fold to evenly coat.

2. Divide the aioli among the tostada shells and spread to the edges. Top with the asparagus and its chermoula, then sprinkle over the crumbled cheese, pickled onion and herbs. Serve immediately.

CHARRED TOMATILLO CHERMOULA

- 1 medium tomatillo, husk removed, rinsed
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 piece (1/4-inch) fresh ginger, peeled
- 1 lime
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 serrano chile, stemmed, seeded and very finely diced
- 1/2 small bunch cilantro, very finely chopped (about 3/4 cup)
- Kosher salt

1. Build a medium-hot fire in a charcoal grill or heat a gas grill to medium-high (alternatively, heat a grill pan over medium-high heat). Put the tomatillo on the grill, and cook, turning to evenly char, until blackened with blistered pockets, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board and let stand until cool enough to handle.

2. Very finely chop the charred tomatillo and transfer to a large bowl. Using a Microplane zester, finely grate the garlic, ginger, and the lime's zest directly on top. Halve the lime and squeeze in the juice, then add the olive oil, cumin, chile and cilantro. Stir to combine and season with salt.

Make Ahead: The chermoula can be refrigerated for up to 1 day.

SERRANO AIOLI

- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 2 serrano chiles, stemmed, seeded and roughly chopped
- 1 large egg yolk
- 1 teaspoon fresh lime juice
- Kosher salt

1. Combine the oil and chiles in a blender and puree until smooth. Pour through a fine-mesh sieve into a liquid measuring cup and discard any solids. You should have two-thirds cup drained oil.

2. Whisk the egg yolk in a small bowl. While whisking, add the serrano oil in a slow, steady stream until the mixture emulsifies. If it breaks, whisk in a teaspoon of warm water. Whisk in the lime juice, then season with salt.

Make Ahead: The aioli can be refrigerated for up to 5 days.

HIBISCUS PICKLED ONIONS

- 1 medium red onion
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 habanero chile
- 3 dried hibiscus flowers

1. Halve the onion lengthwise, then cut it crosswise into very thin half-moons. Put the onions in a glass pint jar or nonreactive container.

2. Bring the vinegar and chile to a boil in a small saucepan, then pour over the onions. Add the hibiscus flowers and turn to coat. Seal the jar or cover and refrigerate overnight.

Make Ahead: The onions can be refrigerated for up to 1 month.

See [Asparagus](#) / Page 2B

Gooseberries and rhubarb: Sour & sweet

Gooseberry and currant (Saxifragaceae) are deciduous and evergreen shrubs. Those without spines are called currants; those with spines, gooseberries. A number of native species are ornamental; 4 are sold in nurseries. Their fruit attracts birds. Gooseberries are sensitive to overly humid climates where they tend toward mildew. It is important that your water source be low in sodium, as they are sensitive to high levels of sodium also.

Ribes alpinum (Alpine Currant) is a deciduous shrub, zones 1-3, spineless, 4 to 5 feet tall, dense and twiggy growth. It has roundish, toothed and lobed leaves 1/2-1 1/2 inches across.



BETWEEN THE ROWS

WENDY SCHMIDT

Good hedge plant, needing average water. Flowers and fruit are inconspicuous.

Ribes aureum (Golden Currant) is

deciduous shrub, all zones, native to inland regions of the West. Erect growth; 3 to 6 feet tall. Light green lobed and toothed leaves. Clusters of small, bright yellow spring flowers with a spicy fragrance bringing the common name clove currant to this variety. Plant in full sun to shade. Prefers moderate summer watering.

Ribes nigrum (Black Currant) is a deciduous shrub, zones 1-7. Most varieties are banned because the plant is an alternate

host to white pine blister rust, but the hybrid variety "Consort" is immune to the disease. Thornless plants grow to 6 feet. Leaves are 3-lobed, deep green, oddly scented. Drooping clusters of whitish flowers turn to juicy, shiny black fruits with blackberry-currant flavor. Fruit is used in jams, jellies, and sauces.

Ribes species. Found in the wild usually growing at the edge of the field and woodland because of their need for partial shade. The wild gooseberry has whitish-cream flowers blooming in spring and an abundance of spines. Even though the berries ripen to pink or lavender, they are usually harvested when light green to make the best jam or pie.

See [Sweet](#) / Page 2B