



DORY'S DIARY

DOROTHY SWART FLESHMAN

The (not) 'legend' of the Bridge of the Gods

For a time there was a lot of talk about whether or not there was a place called the Bridge of the Gods along the Columbia River.

Some said it was just an Indian legend and hadn't really existed at all except in story telling. I can't understand why it has been doubted, for there are natural bridges in many locations, or at least used to be before time and nature weakened and destroyed them.

I know there was one such bridge, for I saw a portion of it, the part that jutted out from the hillside and hung precariously in the air. "They" said it was going to be totally destroyed, the next day being a Monday, so we were there on a Sunday.

It was in the early years of my becoming a teenager, age 12 or 13, and our family was making one of its rare visits to Portland and the coast where we were invited to enjoy the beach with family where an aunt and uncle owned a small cabin, at Lincoln City, perhaps.

On what was then a long journey in my parents' blue Ford car in 1938 or so, we had stopped for a rest break at Cascade Locks, I believe it was, seeking my Dad's history lesson and perhaps an ice cream cone.

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BETWEEN THE ROWS

WENDY SCHMIDT

Beets: They deserve our respect

I think beets have a lot of undeserved dislike pointed in their direction. I didn't hate beets as a child — not like I hated canned spinach. It was just not at the top of the list like ice cream was. Not until you come to pickled beets. Now, those were special and a whole jar could disappear in one meal.

Beet (*Chenopodiaceae*), *Beta vulgaris* — cool-weather biennials that are grown as annuals, producing their globular or tapering roots and their reddish green tops (both used as cooking vegetables) during their first season.

Garden beets have red, yellow, or white roots. Excellent red varieties include Crosby's Egyptian, Early Wonder, and Ruby Queen, early types that are ready to be harvested 55 to 60 days after seeds are sown; and Detroit Dark Red or King Red, which mature in 65 to 80 days and can be used for winter storage.

Beets grow best in a soil with a pH of 6.0-7.5. Beets are not harmed by spring or fall frosts. However, roots become tough in hot weather.

Beet seeds come in clumps containing three or more seeds. Sow the clumps ½ inch deep and 1 inch apart in rows 14 to 16 inches apart. Several plants come up close together from each clump. Pull up all but the strongest plant in each group. The ones you pull out can be eaten in salad or steamed for dinner. When the seedlings become 6 inches tall, pull up every other seedling and use its tops and small root. This leaves room for the others to grow.

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Magical Mint



E. Jason Wambasgans/Chicago Tribune/TNS

Perk up your summer with this minty grilled chicken salad.

REFRESHING RECIPES

By JeanMarie Brownson
Chicago Tribune

At this point in the summer, my cooking needs refreshing. Good thing the mint bursts its boundaries in the herb garden.

There's a reason most of us enjoy mint in our toothpaste and chewing gum. It cleans the palate in a way no other ingredient can.

There are many varieties of mint — smooth-leaved, crinkly, variegated, fuzzy, shiny. The square stems identify the plants as members of the mint family. Peppermint and spearmint are my favorites for all-purpose kitchen companions. We plant them as borders around the garden and in pots on the deck for easy harvesting. The plants thrive in sun and shade, and they aren't fussy about soil quality or frequent watering. Starter plants are inexpensive. Even this deep into summer, it's not too late to get them in the ground; you'll have mint sprigs well into the fall.

For those without herb gardens, farmers markets, produce stands and ethnic groceries sell bundles on the cheap. Supermarkets offer little packets that last well in the fridge.

I harvest mint sprigs with scissors and then rinse them well under cool running water. Shake off the water and spread the sprigs on a clean towel to dry. Put the dry sprigs into a zippered plastic bag with a damp square of paper toweling. Close the bag and refrigerate for up a week.

I stock pitchers of water, laced with several sprigs of mint, for a cold refresher I drink all day long. I tuck tiny mint leaves into green salads and fruit bowls for a surprise between bites. Chopped mint in sour cream or plain yogurt makes a delicious dip for cut veggies. Freeze it into ice cubes to spike mojitos and gin-and-tonics with a double dose of mint.

Chopped and added to soft butter, the spread refreshes morning toast or pancakes and dinner's steamed vegetables and grilled fish. Baked sweet potatoes topped with a sesame mint butter prove so delicious they are often all we have for dinner after a summer's walk.

When the garden yields an abundance of mint, I make a variety of condiments to have on hand to perk up my cooking all week long. The hoisin-mint marinade recipe that follows transforms fast-cooking pork tenderloin and chicken pieces. Leftover marinade can enliven grain salads and sandwiches.

If you make no other homemade salad dressing this summer, try the avocado mint version included here. Refreshing, creamy and tangy, the mixture tastes great on hearty green salads — even kale — as well as tomato slices and watermelon chunks or as a veggie dip. I dollop it on grilled fish and sliced eggplant. Try it instead of mayonnaise for a fantastic chicken or egg salad.

HOISIN-MINT MARINADE AND SAUCE

Prep: 10 minutes
Makes: about 1 ¼ cup

½ cup hoisin sauce
¼ cup each: unsweetened rice vinegar, tamar soy sauce
2 tablespoons sweet paprika
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
4 cloves garlic, crushed
2 teaspoons pureed ginger (refrigerated in a tube) OR finely minced fresh ginger
4 to 6 tablespoons finely chopped fresh mint leaves, about 6 large sprigs
½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, optional

Mix all ingredients in a small bowl. Refrigerate covered for up to 1 week.

GRILLED BUTTERFLIED PORK TENDERLOIN WITH HOISIN-MINT SAUCE

Prep: 15 minutes
Marinate: 30 minutes
Cook: 10 minutes
Makes: 3 to 4 servings

If you chose not to butterfly the pork tenderloin, simply marinate it whole in the refrigerator for several hours. Grill the whole tenderloin on the cool side of the grill for 15 to 20 minutes; the internal temperature should be about 145 degrees.

½ cup hoisin-mint marinade, see recipe
1 ½ pounds pork tenderloin (or boneless, skinless chicken thighs or breasts OR 3 pounds bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs)
1 very large white onion, peeled, cut into 4 to 5 thick slices
Thinly sliced fresh mint leaves
Cooked jasmine rice

1. Divide the hoisin-mint mixture in half; set aside half of the mixture to use later as a sauce.
2. Trim and butterfly the pork tenderloin as follows: Use a sharp knife to remove all of the silver skin from outside of the tenderloin. Then cut the tenderloin lengthwise down the middle, making an incision about 1 inch deep. Open the cut like a book. Make a lengthwise incision about ½ inch deep on either side of the first cut. Again, open the tenderloin like a book or unfolding a letter. Place a piece of plastic wrap over the meat; use a meat mallet to pound the tenderloin into a uniform ¾-inch thickness.
3. Put the pork tenderloin on a baking sheet; spread the remaining hoisin-mint marinade over both sides of the meat. Let stand at room temperature, about 30 minutes, or refrigerate loosely covered up to several hours.
4. Prepare a charcoal grill; let coals burn until covered in gray ash. Or heat a gas grill to medium hot. Heat the grill grate.
5. Put pork and onion slices on grill directly over the heat source; cover grill and cook, 7 minutes. Flip meat and onions. Grill covered until pork is nearly firm when pressed and onions are crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Remove to a cutting board to rest for 5 minutes before

slicing thinly.

6. Drizzle meat with the reserved hoisin-mint sauce. Sprinkle with sliced mint leaves. Serve with grilled onions and jasmine rice.

Note: Boneless chicken thighs will cook in about the same time as the butterflied pork tenderloin. Depending on their size, boneless, skinless chicken breasts take 15 to 20 minutes to cook. Bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs or chicken breasts will take 20 to 25 minutes.

GRILLED MINTY CHICKEN SALAD

Prep: 20 minutes
Makes: 2 main-course salads

I plan ahead and make grilled chicken with the hoisin-mint marinade just so I have leftovers for this salad; you'll need about 3 chicken thighs or 2 small chicken breasts. The hoisin-mint pork tastes great here too; so does rotisserie chicken from the supermarket. Trader Joe's Cruciferous Crunch Collection makes a fast substitute for shredded cabbages and kales.

6 cups (total 8 ounces) hearty salad greens such as shredded kale, shredded Brussels sprouts, tom radicchio, shredded green and red cabbages
½ red or orange bell pepper, seeded, chopped
½ cup dried cranberries or raisins
¼ cup roasted, salted sunflower seeds, pepitas, chopped almonds or pecans
2 to 3 tablespoons each, thinly sliced: mint leaves, cilantro leaves, chives
1 ½ to 2 cups diced boneless, skinless hoisin-mint grilled chicken (or pork) or rotisserie chicken
1/3 to ½ cup creamy avocado-mint dressing, see recipe
1 small avocado, halved, pitted, diced

1. Mix salad greens, bell pepper, cranberries, sunflower seeds and herbs in a large bowl. Put chicken on a plate; cover loosely with wax paper. Microwave on high (100% power) just long enough to warm the chicken, 45 to 60 seconds.
2. Drizzle dressing over salad mixture. Toss to coat. Add chicken and avocado. Toss again and serve.

CREAMY AVOCADO-MINT DRESSING

Prep: 10 minutes
Makes: about 1 cup

6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons mayonnaise
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar or white balsamic vinegar
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 small ripe avocado, halved, pitted
½ cup loosely packed small mint leaves

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