

Summer pleasure: Sweet corn

By JEANMARIE BROWNSON
The Daily Meal

When friends ask about my favorite foods, my answer changes with the season. In August, the answer is corn, and I enjoy it as often as possible in any form.

One of summer's greatest pleasures is grilled corn. As it turns out, there are two ways to grill corn: in and out of the husk.

To cook corn in the husk, first do your best to extract the silk from whole ears, taking care to keep the husk intact. After a soak in cool water, the ears can be roasted over a gas or charcoal grill, turning often until the husks are beautifully charred, about 30 minutes. The interior will taste of smoke and sweetness. Be sure to roast at least two per guest — nobody will eat just one.

Grilling shucked ears adds char directly to the kernels and takes a mere

15 minutes on the grill. This is my preferred method when sprinkling the kernels over salads or adding them to sautés and stir-fries.

But the joys of corn don't have to be limited to late summer. You can make frozen corn (grilled or raw) to enjoy after the season ends by freezing corn kernels in a shallow layer on a baking sheet until the corn is solid. Then spoon it into freezer bags or containers and freeze for up to four months. An average-size ear of corn yields about 1 cup of corn kernels, so plan your freezing accordingly.

If you're new to enjoying fresh ears of corn off the cob, it's important to know how to cut the kernels off the cob safely. First, stand the cob up in a large bowl holding it at the top with one hand. Starting at the top, use a sharp knife to cut the kernels from the cob, working



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Corn and edamame succotash salad, top with queso fresco, prepared and style by Shannon Kinsella.



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Corn and maple ice cream, prepared and style by Shannon Kinsella.

your way down. Turn the cob and repeat the cutting until the cob is clean.

What to do with all that corn? You can cook it in a skillet — corn and bacon pair as perfectly as peanut butter and jelly. Add ripe tomatoes and lots of basil for a skillet full of goodness that pleases just about everyone. Serve it over lettuce leaves as a side dish to grilled fish, chicken or skewered shrimp. You can also stir in sautéed chunks of tofu or feta to turn this into a main dish.

In another classic combo, I love corn and lima beans in a summery succotash. Here, the corn gets grilled along with sweet onion and tender

napa cabbage. Shelled edamame makes a more contemporary version of the old-time dish, but we don't pass up lima beans when we can find baby limas in the freezer case. Crumbled fresh cheese or a drizzle of heavy cream enriches the dish.

Sweet corn ice cream always brings back memories of a family vacation in Playa del Carmen, Mexico. We ordered it sprinkled with hot chile and lime. The surprising combination is as addicting as the sweet and salty duo of cheese popcorn and caramel corn, making this one of the things every foodie should have on their summer bucket list.

BACON, BASIL AND TOMATO SKILLET CORN

Prep 20 minutes
Cook 20 minutes
Makes 4 cups (about 6 servings)

Ingredients:
4 thick slices (8 ounces total) smoky bacon, cut crosswise into 1/4 inch pieces
2 shallots or 1 small white onion, finely chopped
1 large poblano chile, seeded, chopped
1 large or 2 small cloves garlic, finely minced
3 cups fresh or grilled corn kernels
1 pint ripe cherry tomatoes, halved or 2 to 3 cups large chunks ripe tomatoes
1/2 teaspoon coarse (kosher) salt

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 cup loosely packed thinly sliced fresh basil leaves, about 1 1/4 ounces

Directions:

Step 1: In a large, well-seasoned cast-iron or nonstick skillet over medium heat, cook 8 ounces sliced bacon, stirring often, until bacon is crisp and golden, about 10 minutes. Remove bacon with a slotted spoon to a plate. Tip off (and save for another use) all but 2 tablespoons of the rendered fat from the pan.

Step 2: Add 2 chopped shallots and 1 seeded, chopped poblano to the pan. Cook over medium heat, stirring often until soft, about 4 minutes.

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Historic building's story has a tragic chapter

By GINNY MAMMEN

Traveling back in time east on Adams Avenue in La Grande, next to the N. K. West Building and currently the home of Community Merchants, we arrive at a vacant lot which will become 1210 Adams, the home of the Gardner Building, the tallest building on the block.

In the mid 1880s the railroad came to La Grande and over the years had introduced new people, many being railroad employees, to this enterprising new town. One of these was John C. Gardner, an engineer on the O&W route. Like many of the other railroaders, he believed in investing in this growing community and purchased lot 5 in Chaplin's Addition. In May of 1901 he finalized plans for a two-story brick building.

By late 1901 the building at 1210 was completed and ready for occupancy. A drug store formerly located in the Buzzini Building since 1898 was ready for a new location, so owners O.V. Allen and A. T. Hill moved their establishment down the street and set up shop in the Gardner Building. This established the usage of the building for the next 80-plus years as a drug store, except for a few years in the 1930s when it was Wagner's Hardware Store. The last drug store to be located at this location was Red Cross Drug owned by Bob and Sue Coulter. When they relocated, it became the home of McGlasson's Stationery.

That is not to say there weren't other activities and businesses happening at that location. The second floor had a variety of interesting occupants over the years. In December of 1901 The Observer ran the following: "The world's most Celebrated Palmist and Clairvoyant who is now located on Adams Avenue over Hill & Allen's drug store, has done a rushing business all week." This was Professor Francis, who claimed "No matter what your trouble is he can and will help you,



Fred Hill Collection

Adams Avenue in La Grande, about 1910.

and if you are not helped after a visit he will refuse to accept a fee."

Over the years there were more permanent occupants on the second floor such as Drs. Newell L. Smith, and C. B. Cauthorn, Dentists; Dr. P. A. Charlton, veterinary surgeon; and Dr. Richard P. Landus, physician and surgeon. In addition to the many medical providers, there were other business such as The Ladies Store where dressmaking, ladies tailoring and remodeling were specialties. At one time the second floor even housed a violin studio.

As stated before, businesses come and go with their varying services and goods, but the real story of a building is the story of the people, both those who constructed it and those who inhabited it. This building is no exception. The people make the story, whether it be happy or sad. We first take a look at the life of John Gardner, the man who built the building.

John was born in 1862 in Minnesota to John Gardner, a farmer, and his wife

Kate, who had come to the U. S. from Ireland. Young John, like many other young men of that time, saw great opportunity in getting away from the farm by going to work for the railroad. After traveling through La Grande for some years as an engineer, sometime in the late 1880s he decided to make this his home.

John was a bachelor until he met young Edith Turner, 21 years his junior, who was working in the home of a fellow engineer and his wife. John and Edith were married in 1905. John Gardner was considered one of the early pioneers of La Grande, having been a part of the city government, serving on the first La Grande Commission when it was introduced in 1913 and later serving as president of the Commission.

John and Edith moved from La Grande in 1915 when John was transferred to Portland. Then in December of 1921 there was the news of a horrific train wreck involving O.W.R. & N trains No 12 and 17, which met in a head-on collision near

Celilo. The engineer on No. 17 was John Gardner. There were 10 people who lost their lives in the crash. John survived but was injured and never fully recovered. He died in July 1928 at the age of 66, leaving his wife and two sons.

The other person with an interesting story was O. V. Allen. Orien Allen was born in 1867 in Kansas to William K. Allen, a farmer, and his wife Mary. In his 20s, Orien started his journey west. It is not certain when he arrived in Oregon but it was sometime in the mid to late 1880s. He was living in Newberg where he met Albert Hill. The two became friends and by 1898 they had moved to La Grande and opened a drug store in the Buzzini Building.

Orien Allen was a bachelor when he came to La Grande, but in 1901 he married a young woman named Ambia Wright. He was a young man with great ambition and it wasn't long until he and Ambia moved to Boise. In March of 1904 he sold his interest in the business to his partner Albert Hill. In Boise Orien became well known as a merchant and served on numerous local boards and ran for various offices. In 1910 he decided to run for State Treasurer and he won the election. Here is where Orien should have contacted Professor Francis, the clairvoyant.

In October of 1914, O.V. Allen pleaded guilty to embezzling Idaho State funds in the amount of \$92,000. This would be a current value of nearly \$2.5 million. He was sentenced to five to 10 years in the Idaho State Prison in Ada County. He was 47 years old. After five years he was granted parole in October of 1919. A year later he suffered a paralytic stroke. Thinking the California climate would benefit his health, he was moved there in December of 1920 and died on Jan. 1, 1921 at the age of 53.

Keep looking up! Enjoy!