



KITCHEN DIVA PHOTO

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MORE THAN SKIN DEEP

BY ANGELA SHELF MEDEARIS AND GINA HARLOW
THE KITCHEN DIVA

“What is that?” This is what someone is sure to ask you at the checkout counter when you load your Jerusalem Artichoke, better known as a Sunchoke, on the conveyor. You’ll proudly do a little promotional pitch for the vegetable. “You should try them. They’re delicious! Like a cross between an artichoke heart and a potato.”

Like many tubers, sunchokes look a little strange. But when it comes to food, looks often can be deceiving. A sunchoke is the tasty, knobby root of a sunflower. Until recently, this native of North America was more popular in Europe than in the United States.

The sunchoke is a hardy perennial that can grow in a variety of conditions, and is not frost tender. With water shortages and the growing cost of agriculture, farmers were looking for ecologically sustainable crops, and the sunchoke fit their needs.

Sunchokes now are being grown both commercially and by home garden-

ers. Many small organic farms also are successfully growing sunchokes, so look for them at farm stands and farmers’ markets (they resemble a ginger root). The crop does have its downside: It has a tendency to grow wild, and can be invasive, presenting challenges for farmers and backyard gardeners alike.

As a healthy addition to our diet, sunchokes are a low-glycemic food, and possess a significant amount of protein and very little starch. They also are rich in inulin, a natural fructose type of carbohydrate. Inulin is thought to be better tolerated by those with Type 2 diabetes.

When shopping for sunchokes, look for firm, brown-colored tubers. If they’re beginning to darken, they’re not fresh. After you get them home, store in paper towels in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to two weeks. Don’t wash your sunchokes until you’re ready to use them, as moisture can lead to spoiling. Sunchokes have a thin skin and don’t need to be peeled.

Sunchokes are extremely versatile. You can use

them in the same way you typically use a potato. They have a crunchy texture and are delicious raw. When roasted, their nutty flavor comes out. Steamed sunchokes can stand alone or mixed with other vegetables, used in a gratin or to make a delicious soup. If you’re using sunchokes in a creamed soup or puree and want to remove the peel for presentation color, pass them through a food mill or a fine mesh strainer.

This recipe for Sunchoke Chips With Parmesan and Parsley is a delicious alternative to potato chips.

— Angela Shelf Medearis is an award-winning children’s author, culinary historian and author of seven cookbooks. Her new cookbook is “The Kitchen Diva’s Diabetic Cookbook.” Her website is www.divapro.com. To see how-to videos, recipes and much, much more, Like Angela Shelf Medearis, The Kitchen Diva! on Facebook. Read Gina Harlow’s blog about food and gardening at www.peachesandprosciutto.com. Recipes may not be reprinted without permission from Angela Shelf Medearis

SUNCHOKE CHIPS WITH PARMESAN AND PARSLEY

- 2 pounds unpeeled sunchokes (also called Jerusalem artichokes), scrubbed
- Vegetable oil (for frying)
- 1 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan
- 1 1/2 teaspoons minced fresh parsley

1. Fill a large bowl with cold water. Slice sunchokes into thin rounds (about 1/16 inch thick), immediately dropping into bowl of water to prevent browning. Rinse and drain 3 times to remove some of the starch for a crisper chip. Pat dry with paper towels.

2. Pour enough oil into large deep skillet to reach depth of 1/2 inch. Submerge bulb of deep-fry thermometer into oil; lean top of thermometer against skillet rim. Heat oil to 375 F. Mix salt, Parmesan and parsley together in small bowl, blending well, and set aside.

3. Working in batches, fry sunchoke slices until golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Using a skimmer, transfer chips to a wire rack placed over a paper-lined baking pan to drain. While chips are hot, sprinkle with the Parmesan

and salt mixture. The chips won’t be crispy immediately out of the fryer, so wait a few minutes for them to crisp up. Mound chips in bowl and serve. Serves 8.

To bake the chips:

1. Preheat oven to 400 F. Line two baking sheets with foil and lightly grease with cooking-oil spray. Place slices in a single layer on the two sheets. Spray each slice with oil, then sprinkle salt on top.

2. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes. If they aren’t golden brown and crisp, bake in 3 to 5 minute increments until done. Sprinkle with topping of your choice.

Alternate toppings:

For protein boost and cheese flavor: sprinkle chips with 1/2 cup nutritional yeast

For spicy flavor: sprinkle with 1 tablespoon chili powder and 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

For salt and vinegar chips: soak sunchokes in vinegar for 2 hours before frying. Drain and pat completely dry. Fry or bake as directed, and sprinkle with salt.

EASTERN OREGON FORUM



Blue Mountain Community College
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AAUW

Bridget Farley
“Russia - Deconstructing a Dictator: Who is Vladimir Putin and What Does He Want?”

Tuesday, January 13th, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.
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Hermiston Community Center

The 22nd edition of the Melonville Comedy Festival will feature three headlining stand up comedians. The comics have been seen on Last Comic Standing, HBO, Comedy Central, and on the Bob and Tom Radio Show.



BRAD UPTON

Has been working as a stand-up comic for 35 years. He has appeared in the HBO Comedy Festival, NPR Radio's Rewind, and will perform this spring with Neal McCoy and Johnny Matthis. Brad has several albums that are played on XM Satellite Radio



DAVID CROWE

Is a frequent guest on the BOB AND TOM Radio show, appeared in his own Comedy Central special, and can be heard often on Satellite Radio.



DUANE GOAD

Is a comic who has worked in many of the top clubs in the United States. Duane is an opening act to Lewis Black and Jim Gaffigan. Goad also has an animated show on Comedy Central.

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Tickets available at
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TO THE READERS OF AmericanProfile®



We have been informed that Athlon Media Group – the company that publishes American Profile, Relish and Spry magazines – will be publishing American Profile twice a month rather than weekly, effective immediately.

The Hermiston Herald will continue to distribute Athlon’s food magazine, Relish, 11 times a year, with a combined January/February issue. We will also continue to distribute Spry, the health and wellness magazine, once a month.



Hermiston Herald