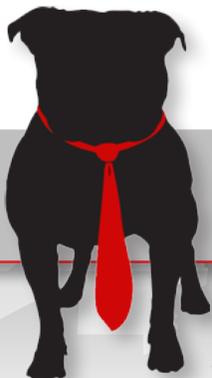


AUGUST 2020

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FROM THE DESK OF *JOHN RAZUMICH*

MAKE EVERY DAY A CELEBRATION WITH THESE ODD AUGUST HOLIDAYS!

1. National Mountain Climbing Day
2. International Forgiveness Day
3. National Watermelon Day
4. National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day
5. Work Like a Dog Day
6. Wiggle Your Toes Day
7. National Lighthouse Day
8. Sneak Some Zucchini onto Your Neighbor's Porch Day
9. Book Lover's Day
10. Lazy Day
11. Son and Daughter Day
12. Middle Child's Day
13. Left Handers' Day
14. National Creamsicle Day
15. National Honey Bee Awareness Day
16. National Tell a Joke Day
17. National Thriftshop Day
18. Bad Poetry Day
19. National Potato Day
20. World Mosquito Day
21. Senior Citizen's Day
22. National Tooth Fairy Day
23. Ride the Wind Day
24. Vesuvius Day
25. Kiss and Make Up Day
26. Women's Equality Day
27. Just Because Day
28. Race Your Mouse Day
29. International Bacon Day
30. Frankenstein Day
31. National Eat Outside Day



- JOHN RAZUMICH



EVERYTHING'S PEACHY

August marks the peak of peach season, so there's no better time to talk about the decadent stone fruit and its history.

For many people, peaches are the ultimate summertime fruit, right up there with watermelon and strawberries. They're in season between June and August, but it isn't until August that peaches are said to be at their most flavorful.

One state in particular has a close affinity with the peach. Just as Florida is associated with the orange and Hawaii is associated with the pineapple, Georgia is all about the peach. Every summer in Georgia, you can find peaches around every corner and in almost every culinary creation, including pie, cobbler, tea, and even salsa.

But how did the peach come to be associated with Georgia? Well, it's a long story that spans several thousand years and countries across the globe.

In 2014, researchers confirmed they had discovered major archaeological evidence that the peach was being cultivated in China around 6,000 B.C. They published their findings in PLOS One, a peer-reviewed journal published by the Public Library of Science. Up to that point, most evidence suggested that the Chinese began cultivating peaches only around 2,000 B.C., but it seems that humans and the peach go even further back.

The fruit, native to China, found its way to Japan around 4,500 B.C. By then, it was starting to become the peach most of us are familiar with today: a juicy yellow- or white-fleshed fruit packed with flavor. Through trade and travel, the peach made its way across Asia and the Middle East.

By the year 300 B.C., the peach entered parts of Europe. There are tales of Alexander the Great bringing the peach to Europe after discovering the tasty fruit during his

Continued on Page 2 ...



quest to conquer the Persians, but these stories are largely untrue. The peach simply found its way around the globe thanks to good old-fashioned trade.

It wasn't until hundreds of years later in the 1500s that the peach made its way to the Americas. It was brought to North America

by Spanish explorers. Interestingly enough, the peach wasn't introduced to England and France until the 1600s.

As the peach gained popularity, it became a status symbol. It was difficult to get, which drove the price up. But it wasn't long until the peach found its way into the American

colonies where even Thomas Jefferson planted peach trees around his estate, Monticello. But back then, it wasn't being broadly or commercially cultivated.

On top of being difficult to get, peaches spoiled easily. Anyone who has had peaches can attest: Fresh peaches don't last long once they're harvested. Because of this, peaches remained expensive until the 1800s when the growing U.S. population began providing more opportunities to take this fragile fruit to market. In response, farmers began planting peach groves in many eastern states — which have temperate climates, ideal weather for a long peach season — to make a profit. While peaches can be grown anywhere in the United States, the best peaches come from temperate states, like Georgia, which is why it's nicknamed "The Peach State."

This summer, as you bite into a sweet, juicy peach, you'll know that single piece of fruit comes with a history that spans the globe and several millennia.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE INCREDIBLE STORY OF ZEN BUDDHIST CHEF JEONG KWAN

One of the world's greatest chefs can't be found in a restaurant. Instead, she serves fellow nuns and occasional visitors in a Zen Buddhist monastery in Korea.

To fully describe the incredible success of Jeong Kwan, you must first consider a factor that Western cuisine has ignored for millennia. While most people would assume Korean food is all about its famed barbecue, another pillar of the culture goes largely unacknowledged: Korean temple cuisine, which originated in the country's Buddhist monasteries. A philosophy of Zen Buddhism is to not crave food and satisfy yourself only enough to be prepared for meditation, so you might think that flavor would be of little consequence in a monastery's kitchen. However, you'd be wrong.

The West's perception of Korean temple cuisine was challenged shortly after Eric Ripert visited Kwan's monastery and experienced her cooking during a trip to Korea.

Ripert invited Kwan to New York City to prepare food in a private room at Le Bernardin, where she sent global shockwaves through the entire fine cuisine community. New York Times writer Jeff Gordinier described her plates as "so elegant, they could've slipped into a tasting menu at Benu or Blanca" and her flavors as "assertive," all while being vegan. More and more critics realized that Kwan's combination of foraging, fermenting, dehydrating, and cooking by season was not a modern practice. In fact, Zen Buddhist monks like Kwan mastered cooking in this tradition hundreds of years ago.

"With food, we can share and communicate our emotions. It's that mindset of sharing that is really what you're eating," Kwan says at the start of her titular episode of Netflix's documentary series "Chef's Table." She continues, "There is no difference between cooking and pursuing Buddha's way."

Whether for enlightenment or simply connecting with friends and family, sharing home-cooked meals can be an emotionally restorative experience as much as it is nourishing. This month, indulge in something special and homemade or try your hand at Korean temple cuisine by Googling some of Jeong Kwan's recipes.



PRIVATE WOJTEK, HEROIC BROWN BEAR OF WWII

Many brave soldiers answered the call to bear arms during WWII, but one Polish artillery supply company took things a step further and armed a bear. That's right — among the countless animal heroes of WWII was a full-grown brown bear from the mountains of Northern Iran named Wojtek.

Wojtek first joined the Polish soldiers as a cub. A young Iranian boy found him after a hunter most likely shot his mother. Then, when a group of Polish prisoners of war, recently released from Soviet gulags to join the Allied forces, passed through the town where the boy and the bear cub lived, they traded some of their rations for the cub and took him with them.

The soldiers loved the cub and named him Wojtek, which means "happy warrior" in Polish. They nursed him with condensed milk from a vodka bottle and fed him some of their limited rations. Over time, the bear grew to be 6 feet tall and over 400 pounds, but because he had grown up around humans, he was a gentle giant. He learned several mannerisms from

his human friends and even took a liking to beer and cigarettes. For the many soldiers who had lost or were separated from their families, Wojtek was a welcome boost to morale.

When the soldiers reached the coast of Egypt, where they were to embark by boat to Italy, British soldiers wouldn't let Wojtek on board because he wasn't a soldier. So naturally, the Polish soldiers gave Wojtek a service number, and he officially became a private in their company, complete with a rank and a paybook.

Private Wojtek's moment of fame came when his company fought in the Battle of Monte Cassino. The bear saw his human counterparts carrying crates of artillery shells, and he began mirroring their actions. Throughout the entire battle, he calmly carried crates of ammo, which would have required four men to lift, to his comrades. In honor of Wojtek's service during the battle, the company changed its emblem to an image of a bear carrying an artillery shell, and Wojtek was promoted to the rank of corporal.

After the war, Wojtek was moved to a zoo in Edinburgh, Scotland, where he lived until he was 21 years old. There is now a bronze statue of Wojtek in Edinburgh's West Princes Street Gardens, ensuring that this brave bear will not be forgotten.



TAKE A BREAK!



Ingredients

- 8 oz penne or fusilli pasta
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- Pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 2 large fresh peaches, diced or sliced
- 1/2 medium red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 pint heirloom cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup corn
- 6 cups arugula, packed

Directions

1. In a large pot of boiling water, cook pasta for approximately 9 minutes or until al dente. Drain pasta and place in a separate bowl.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, red pepper flakes, salt, pepper, and lemon juice. Drizzle the dressing over the pasta and toss with the feta cheese.
3. Add peaches, red onions, tomatoes, corn, and arugula to the pasta mixture. Lightly toss to mix well. Add more olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper to taste.



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ONE SWEET LAWSUIT DID JELLY BELLY MISREPRESENT ITS PRODUCT?

Most of us consider it common knowledge that Jelly Belly's popular jelly beans, and any other candy, contain sugar. The candy, made by Jelly Belly Candy Company, has been in production for decades, and many consider it an American confectionery staple. But when the company began offering its famous jelly beans in a new sport-enhancing product line, it left at least one consumer confused.

In 2017, Jessica Gomez filed a class-action lawsuit with the Superior Court of California against the Jelly Belly Candy Company. Gomez alleged fraud, negligent representation, and product liability. The suit also alleged that the product violated California's Consumer Legal Remedies Act, false advertising law, and unfair business practices law.

What was the alleged fraud and negligent representation? The suit claimed Jelly Belly

purposely excluded the word "sugar" from their Sport Beans products, which are marketed as enhancing athletic performance. Instead, the ingredient was listed as "evaporated cane juice."

This, the plaintiff's lawyers explained, misled consumers into believing the product did not contain sugar. In the complaint, the plaintiff stated, "In order to make the product appear even more appropriate for athletes and less like a candy, the defendant lists 'evaporated cane juice' as an ingredient in its product."

However, the product's Nutrition Facts label states that one serving of Sport Beans contains 19 grams of sugar. In a motion to dismiss, the Jelly Belly company called the claims "nonsense" and said that "no reasonable consumer could have been deceived by Sport Beans' labeling."



Such clever labeling is common enough that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has addressed it. The FDA makes clear that evaporated cane juice is, in fact, sugar. Its guidelines to food manufacturers state that "sweeteners derived from sugar cane should not be declared on food labels as evaporated cane juice," though this is merely a suggestion and not a legal requirement.

A Sacramento judge threw out the lawsuit saying it "did not pass legal muster."