

SPICED CHICKEN + BUTTERNUT WITH TAHINI SAUCE

Adapted from Home Beccanomics

INGREDIENTS

¼ cup olive oil	8 chicken thighs, bone in, skin on
2 tsp paprika	
1 tsp cinnamon	1 butternut squash, peeled, halved, seeded, and sliced
1 tsp ground ginger	
1/2 tsp cayenne	1 tbsp fresh cilantro (for garnish)
1/2 tsp kosher salt	
1/4 tsp black pepper	

TAHINI SAUCE

2 garlic cloves
2 oz tahini
5 tbsp water
2 tsp vinegar
2 tbsp olive oil

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line two baking sheets with foil.
2. Mix olive oil in a bowl with spices, salt and pepper, forming a paste.
3. Lay out chicken on one sheet, skin side down. Lay squash on a second sheet, evenly spaced. Brush the paste on both sides of chicken and squash.
5. Bake both for 45 minutes. Flip squash after 30 minute mark – should be golden brown and tender.
6. To make Tahini Sauce: Finely chop garlic. Transfer to a medium bowl, then whisk in sauce ingredients. Season with salt and pepper. If needed, whisk in more water until thin enough to drizzle.
7. Remove squash and set aside. Remove chicken, flip each piece, and return to oven. When top is golden brown, and thickest part registers 165°F (~10 more minutes), chicken is done.
8. Chop cilantro. Drizzle sauce and garnish with cilantro. Serve.

MARINATED GRILLED MUSHROOMS

Adapted from the Mushroom Council



1 tbsp butter, diced	1 tbsp minced garlic
1 8oz whole mushrooms, cleaned and patted dry	1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
½ cup reduced sodium soy sauce	1/4 cup Romano cheese, grated

1. Whisk soy sauce, garlic and ginger in a medium bowl. Add mushrooms and stir. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
2. Prep a large piece of foil by spraying with cooking spray. Add diced butter.
3. Remove marinated mushrooms from bowl with a slotted spoon. Place mushrooms in the foil. Fold up packet and seal tightly.
4. Grill over medium high heat, turning the foil packet twice, for 7-10 minutes or until mushrooms are tender.
5. Carefully remove from foil and top the mushrooms with grated Romano cheese. Serve warm as an appetizer or side dish.
6. For a stovetop method, sauté marinated mushrooms in melted butter for 7-10 minutes over medium high heat.



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LEAFY GREENS

Store unwashed in original bag, or chop, wash, and dry with a salad spinner, and return to bag with a dry paper towel to absorb moisture. Always refrigerate.



CABBAGE, CARROTS, WINTER RADISHES, HAKUREI, AND BEETS

Store in the cold area of the fridge; these will keep a long time.



WINTER SQUASH

Store in a cool, dry location, but don't let freeze; once cut, refrigerate and use within 5-7 days.



JARRED ITEMS

Favorites like Honey, Marinara, BBQ Sauce, Kvass, Ferments, or Salsa can round out your pantry and complement your meats and veggies.



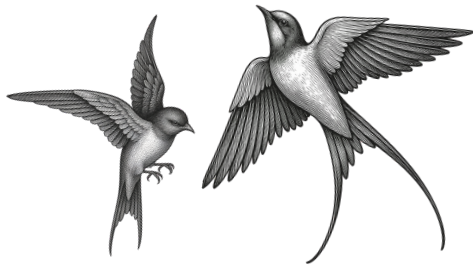
SWEET POTATOES

Store sweet potatoes at room temperature and they will keep for weeks or months.



FRESH HERBS

Place in water in the refrigerator.



COHABITATION WITH THE BARN SWALLOW

Just outside the front door of our little on-farm store is a barn swallow nest. The location comes with much consternation to the breeding pair, even though they picked the spot. People come and go in that space throughout the day, their heads bobbing a couple of feet below the birds' adobe home. We are glad to cohabitate with these birds, as they are the epitome of doing their due diligence to procreate the species.

We, like the swallows, go about our business of securing wholesome, organic food as the world swirls around us. Customers and staff alike marvel at the birds' behavior and appreciate being so close to nature—and sometimes quite close as the barn swallows chatter and swoop by our heads to be sure we leave their nests be.

The backstory is this: the swallows' nest used to be inside what is now the packing shed. We actually held off enclosing and winterizing the building for a couple of years in reverence for these little birds. I still remember what I was wearing the day I took down their nest while they were thousands of miles away, having made their seasonal migration to

somewhere in Central or South America. We were all relieved when they returned the next year and built a new nest on the other side of the barn.

To think, this little bird that weighs no more than seven or eight pennies travels so far each winter. I would guess the people living there also refer to these birds as "their" barn swallows since they return to the same nest each season.

Think about that: They return to the exact same nest, meaning they know exactly where they are going while traveling such great distances.

Barn swallows, and their cousins the tree swallows and purple martins, are classified as aerial insectivores. This means they eat flying insects in flight.

As we mow pastures, the disruption of the whirling blades sends insects up into the air to avoid the disturbance or because of it. The swallows and martins show their flashes of purple, teal and gold as they swoop and dive and change direction all around our heads in this learned behavior of opportunity.

When Laurie Thomas, UK Extension forester, led the bird-focused farm tour out here a few years ago, tour goers witnessed a group of these birds working a pasture. One would skim the tops of the plants sending insects into flight for the others to come along and feed. I asked her how many insects they would eat in a day, dozens? Hundreds?

She said thousands. While that is awesome organic pest control, I wonder if they also consume the green lacewings and braconid wasps—the bugs we want to keep around.

The swallows must realize by now we are not going to harm them, even being in such close proximity, though we clearly make mom nervous. While I write this not 8 feet away, mom is watching me as she shifts and resettles on the nest.

I can only imagine how tiny and fragile her eggs must be. When she left the nest (most likely to feed herself) I got a look at her nest. Remember, the nest itself is no more than 3 inches across. The eggs, therefore, were no wider than dimes.

Along with the barn swallow, "our" mockingbird has been serenading me from the downed oak tree as I write this story, running through her series of other birds' calls in sets of three. She reminds me that each species of bird has its niche.

We may be more like the swallows than we realize as we go about our days navigating our local environment and securing good food while the world swirls around us.

Mac Stone



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