

Nova Scotian reader shares 'down east' lobster expertise

Happy Father's Day to all the dads out there! Now, I'm not quite sure that fiddleheads with Asian vinaigrette would be the top pick for Father's Day dinner, but we have been trying to buy, prepare, photograph and write about these lovely little delicacies for weeks.

They seemed to be late into the stores this year and of course, they don't last for long— as a matter of fact, if you want to make this recipe this year, you'd better run, not walk to the store right now! Or, better yet, save the recipe for next spring and make it as soon as they come out. Either way, these are an excellent side dish to a nice juicy steak or perfect on a potluck buffet as an unusual salad!

It is a very small world. We wrote an article at the beginning of May about lobster and how to cook and eat them. Never, in my wildest dreams would I have imagined that we would get an e-mail from a gentleman in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. His name is Dave Whiting and he is the port manager in Yarmouth. Amazing to think that someone so far away reads our column and we can communicate so easily over so many miles! He sent in some excellent comments that we'd like to share.

In our article, we mentioned that early



summer was the best lobster season. Port Manager Dave tells us:

"The best season (for lobster) is actually December to May, that's in District 34, the south and southwest shore of Nova Scotia. The water is colder then and the lobsters tend to have a harder shell with more meat. A lot of the "Maine" lobster that are so famous in the U.S. actually come from Nova Scotia at that time of the year. The reason people like the June season is that the one season (south shore) is just ending and the north shore's is just beginning. More lobster equals better (cheaper) price. There is a catch though; if the water is too cold the lobster don't move around much (as in move into the traps) so the catch is down. That's the case this year and the price hit \$14 per pound at the wharf. Most people also think that getting them right at

the wharf is the best you can have, but they should sit (for a day) to allow the bait (used to catch them) to go through them, since they use rotten fish as the bait."

Dave also goes on to say that when cooking them, don't forget to snip off the rubber bands on the claws first, or the rubber taste carries over to the meat (good point that we forgot to mention!). He also says that the "scream" that people claim to hear when they are plunged into the boiling water is actually the air coming from the shell. A favourite dish in Yarmouth is apparently creamed lobster. Dave says that you warm up cooked lobster with lots of butter, add cream, some salt and pepper. Then, once it is warmed, you add one teaspoon of vinegar for each serving— don't let it boil. Serve it over toast. Sounds fabulous to me— I wish I could pop in to Dave's house tonight for dinner!

Thank you Dave, for writing and telling us a bit more about something we love— food! If there are any other readers out there with simple tips, tricks, stories or otherwise food-related info, please send it on over— we'd love to hear from you. In the meantime, have fun and keep cooking!

(Lori and Gerry can be reached at whatscookin@independentfreepress.com)

Fiddleheads in Asian Vinaigrette

Serves four
Ingredients

- 1 lb (500g) fiddleheads, trimmed, dehusked
- 2 tbsp canola, safflower or sunflower oil
- 1 tbsp rice vinegar
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 1/2 tsp sugar
- 1 tbsp toasted sesame seeds

Method

1. In a large pot of boiling, salted water, add fiddleheads. Cook, uncovered five to seven minutes depending on size, until tender. Rinse under cold water, drain. Blot dry with paper towels.

2. In a small bowl, combine oil, rice vinegar, soy sauce, sesame oil and sugar.

3. In serving bowl, toss fiddleheads with dressing. Refrigerate, covered at least four hours. Served chilled or at room temperature, garnished with sesame seeds.



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