

CSA Package Contents:

1 Grassfed beef steak
 1 pt concord grape jelly
 1 12oz piece swiss cheese
 2 lbs spelt flour
 3 lbs red potatoes
 1 lb spinach pasta
 1 bunch kale or mustard greens
 1 bag mixed salad greens
 1/4 lb ramps

Ramps

Among the things that native Americans are said to have shared with early settlers, one was a plant that was unknown outside the continent: the ramp.



Allium tricoccum is the scientific name for ramps, but many call them Spring Onions or Wild Garlic. Similar to a scallion, but with a more garlicky flavor, the ramp is found mostly in the eastern part of the US and into Canada. Unlike a scallion, the ramp has broad flat leaves. Considered a spring delicacy, ramps add a unique onion or garlic like flavor to nearly any dish. Like garlic, ramps are particularly popular in dishes made with eggs or potatoes.

To use ramps, simply cut off the roots of the plant wash and rinse, and chop. Since the season to harvest ramps is pretty short, most ramp lovers will freeze them for use throughout the year. The strong part is the bulb, but the more mild leaves are just as tasty. I was talking to folks at a party a couple of weeks ago and they love them pickled. So much so, that they and their friends forage for them in the spring.

Try simply boiling or grilling ramps as an interesting side dish. Ramps can also be used as an alternative to leeks for interesting soups, or as a substitute for scallions in some more traditional applications. Anyway, make use of this fun and different product while the season allows.

Scalloped Potatoes with Ramps

This recipe is adapted from About.com and can easily be used with leeks, green onions or scallions.

Ingredients:

6 cups sliced potatoes
 3 cups ramps or wild leeks
 salt and pepper to taste
 1/2 cup chicken broth
 3/4 cup heavy cream
 1 1/2 cups shredded Swiss or cheddar cheese

Directions:

Place a layer of sliced potatoes in a buttered 1 1/2-quart casserole, follow with a layer of ramps and a sprinkling of salt and pepper. Repeat layers, ending with potatoes. Combine chicken broth and heavy cream; pour over potatoes and ramps. Bake at 375° for 45 minutes, then top with grated cheese. Return to the oven for about 15 to 20 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender.

Ramp Quiche

This dish is a pretty simple interpretation. Using potatoes as the crust, the filling is a simple egg filling with things from this week's bag added. You could easily add your favorite sautéed mushrooms to this dish.

Ingredients:

2 2/3-3 cups uncooked potatoes, coarsely grated
 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
 1 1/2 cups ramps, chopped
 1 cup Swiss, grated
 3 eggs
 1 cup evaporated milk
 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper

Method:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. In a mixing bowl, combine grated potatoes and oil. Press into bottom and sides of a 9-inch pie pan, making sure there are no holes in the crust. Bake crust in oven until just starting to brown on the edges, about 15 minutes. Remove from oven and let sit for 5-10 minutes

Layer ramps and cheese into crust. In a medium bowl, beat together eggs, milk, salt and pepper. Pour in egg filling over ramps and cheese.

Bake in oven at 425 degrees for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 degrees and bake until browned at top and set in the middle, another 25-30 minutes. Allow to cool for 10-15 minutes before serving

Mustard Greens and Ramps

I saw mustard greens prepared this way by Todd English on the Today Show. This is an adaptation using the ramps.

3 tablespoons olive oil
 2 cups chopped mustard greens
 4 ramps, chopped
 1 cup of white wine
 Salt and pepper

Sautee the ramps in the olive oil over medium heat. Add the mustard greens. Add the white wine to deglaze the pan and add the salt and pepper. Simmer for about 5 minutes. These are a great pairing with cheesy grits or wild rice.

Pasta with Ramps

Looking through blogs and recipe books, we found several recipes for pasta with ramps. Taking the best from many of them, this is the Fresh Fork Market interpretation. It is a hearty main dish, or could be served as a side dish. You could pan fry your steaks from this week's bag and cut into pieces and toss in at the end as well.

1 lb Spinach Linguini
 ¼ lb ramps
 ¼ cup olive oil
 Crushed red pepper flakes
 Shredded swiss or grated parmasean

First start boiling the water for the pasta. Take a heavy skillet and heat up the olive oil over medium heat. Add the ramps, cleaned and chopped, to the oil. Add crushed red pepper flakes to your personal taste. While the ramps are cooking, cook the pasta. Drain the finished pasta and toss in with the ramps. Stir thoroughly mix. Plate the pasta and top with shredded swiss cheese for a more warm French flavor, or with the grated Parmasean for a more Italian style dish.

Pickled Ramps

This is David Chang's recipe from Momofuku. The liquid is enough for about a pound of ramps, so pair it down or use the liquid to pickle some other fun items.

Pickling Brine:

2 cups granulated sugar
 2 cups rice wine vinegar
 2 cups water
 1/4 cup kosher salt
 1/4 cup Japanese Seven Spice (Shichimi Togarashi)
 2 tablespoons Korean crushed red pepper (kochukaru)
 or other mild crushed pepper

Clean ramps well. Trim the roots and place in a heatproof, non reactive bowl. Heat the remaining ingredients to boiling, stirring until all the sugar is dissolved. Pour over ramps and let cool. Put in an airtight container and refrigerate at least overnight. *Shichimi Togarashi is an Asian spice blend.*