

Seasonal Foods: Strawberries | April 2007 | CCM Staff



Welcome to strawberry country. If you fancy this fruit, then you have surely been anticipating a visit to one of the Central Coast's many roadside strawberry stands – it's that time of year. Our fresh, farm-ripened berries are a deep, intense red from top to bottom, without the white "shoulders" and spongy interiors which indicate a berry picked un-ripe and far away. Once you've gathered your share, using them quickly is key. If they must be stored for a few days, place them unwashed in a closed container. When ready to use, wash and trim them and dry on paper towels.

Grilled Flank Steak Salad with Strawberry Chutney

Serves 4

1 1½ pound flank steak
 8 slices smoked bacon
 2 c fresh baby watercress, loosely packed
 6 c Mâche
 2 ripe avocados, sliced
 1½ Tbsp freshly ground black pepper
 fine sea salt
 Strawberry Chutney

In a small skillet over medium heat, sauté the bacon until crisp. Transfer to a plate lined with a paper towel. Crumble into small pieces.

Prepare barbecue (medium-high heat) or preheat broiler. Pat steak dry. Rub salt and a generous amount of pepper onto both sides of steak. Grill about 5 minutes per side for medium-rare. Let steak rest 5 minutes. Halve steak lengthwise. Slice across grain into thin strips.

Place greens in large bowl; strain excess juice from the chutney and drizzle over greens. Add bacon and toss. Season with salt and pepper. Divide salad evenly among 4 plates. Arrange the flank steak and avocado on top, and finish with a large dollop of Strawberry Chutney.

Strawberry Chutney:

¼ c aged balsamic vinegar
 ¼ tsp powdered ginger
 1/8 tsp ground cinnamon
 1/8 tsp ground clove
 1/8 tsp ground allspice
 2 Tbsp granulated sugar

2 Tbsp fresh orange juice
 1 tsp orange zest, finely grated
 2 c diced strawberries
 fine sea salt
 freshly ground black pepper

Combine all ingredients except strawberries, salt, and pepper in a small non-reactive saucepan over low heat. Cook until reduced by 75% – about 15 minutes. Stir in strawberries and remove immediately from heat. Season with salt and pepper. Cool to room temperature.

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