

ISSUE 01

SPRING/SUMMER 2024

Somère Reading

SEASONAL NOTES FROM
OUR KITCHEN



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The Beauty of a Full Kitchen

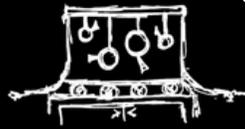
First and most importantly, thank you to everyone who has jumped with me into this sweet and savory space. This started with a kitchen journal I bought to share with my daughter, Sophie, at the beginning of the year. She was 6 months old at the time and just beginning to gum at a few vegetables. My heart melted at her little zest for it. Her enthusiasm for food runs deep. Long before she was born, I spent several years curating a passion for flavors, nutrition and cooking, practicing in functional medicine and creating recipes and resources.

Now with Sophie, I catch myself thinking about all of the potential relationships she might encounter with food as she grows up. I realize how sacred this time in her life is - a time where eating purely sparks joy, and the cooking and sharing of it together brings more nourishment than any single nutrient could.

I want to devote this simple page to the enjoyment of preparing food - whatever that may look like. For me in this season, it's honing my one-armed cooking skills with my baby settled in the other - and our dog, Scotch, mopping the floor. In the next room are keyboard strokes and muffled lectures from my husband's MBA course. The busy days we will look back on and smile, and I forever want to keep record of.

And so, here we are! For anyone reading along who shares this season with me, I am grateful for the common ground - laughs, messes, convivial dinner parties, mornings at the breakfast table, spills that turn into take-out nights. The beauty of a full kitchen; the joy of preparing a meal with & for those we love. I am so glad to be sharing it all with you.

Somère Reading



By SOMÈRE KITCHEN



B Ò N N E
S A I S O N



@somerekitchen

ROMA
HEIRLOOM
TOMATO
FORMULATED BY
SOMÈRE KITCHEN

Tomato
1 large
2 cup
1 TBSP
1 TBSP

Notes on Fermentation

Fermented foods are talked about often as part of a gut-healthy diet, so I wanted to take a dive into the history of fermentation, the chemical process, and the effect fermented foods have on the body.

I also am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to have chatted with Jacin Fitzgerald, a world renowned event planner and highly accoladed hostess. She is an expert on canning and fermenting foods, hosts an annual summer tomato canning party, and is one of the kindest and most inclusive women I have ever met. She generously lent us two of her favorite recipes (one is a first place award winner in Georgia!) - over the next few pages.

History & Nutrition of Fermentation

History

Fermentation is an artful practice that dates back to the beginning of human civilization, as a way to preserve foods through varying seasons and climates, to enhance flavor, and to alter the chemical structure (i.e. creating alcohol from grains). In fact, the earliest evidence of fermentation is beer production in Western Asia 13,000 years ago. Ancient Greeks even worshiped 'Dionysos,' the God of Fermentation. European and Asian cultures have been fermenting milk, soy, fruits, grains, vegetables, herbs, meats, legumes and fish for centuries, and the practice is still as beautiful as it was several millenniums B.C. [1]

The Process

Fermentation is the process of allowing bacteria or yeast to alter the chemical structure of a food, and increase its bioavailability. There are four primary chemical methods, categorized according to the bacteria or yeast used - alcoholic, lactic, acetic and alkali.

Fermentation can happen spontaneously by using different brines to support the growth of bacterial and fungal cultures, or by using established starter cultures. While science and technology have paved the way for very sophisticated and organized fermentation, traditional spontaneous methods are still used in homes and smaller scale productions. [1]

Nutrition

Several years of studies on fermented foods and their health benefits have led these foods to gain popularity as superfoods. Lactic Acid Bacteria (LAB) used in fermentation of yogurts and vegetables help the body synthesize vitamins and minerals, remove toxins, and produce enzymes to improve the bioavailability of those vitamins. Conjugated Linoleic Acids (CLAs) are peptides produced by bacteria during fermentation, and act as prebiotics (helping feed good bacteria in the gut) as well as antimicrobials (fighting bad bacteria that cause inflammation). Therefore, these compounds aid in digestion and reduce inflammation, helping the body to detoxify more efficiently, digest foods more effectively and absorb nutrients better, and improve overall health. [2]

1. Mannaa M, Han G, Seo YS, Park I. Evolution of Food Fermentation Processes and the Use of Multi-Omics in Deciphering the Roles of the Microbiota. *Foods*. 2021 Nov 18;10(11):2861. doi: 10.3390/foods10112861. PMID: 34829140; PMCID: PMC8618017.

2. Şanlıer N, Gökçen BB, Sezgin AC. Health benefits of fermented foods. *Crit Rev Food Sci Nutr*. 2019;59(3):506-527. doi: 10.1080/10408398.2017.1383355. Epub 2017 Oct 20. PMID: 28945458

Caramelized Spring Onion Strawberry Jam**Ingredients**

3 med-sized spring onions sliced. Tops saved for stock in freezer.
 8 cups strawberries roughly chopped
 5 cups sugar + extra for seasoning
 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
 2 tbsp butter
 2-3 tsp white wine vinegar
 2-3 tsp mustard seeds optional
 Salt
 Candy thermometer

Instructions

01. Heat EVOO + butter over med/low in large Dutch oven or pot. Go bigger than you think you need to prevent boiling over / mess.
02. Add onions, season lightly with salt, slowly soften over med/low (adjust as necessary to prevent burning), put lid on pot in between stirring.
03. Once onions start to soften, add mustard seeds if using and white wine vinegar, plus a seasoning of sugar. Let onions continue to caramelize, keep on low to prevent scorching.
04. Put candy thermometer in pot. Once onions start to caramelize, add strawberries + sugar. Bring to low boil over med/high and stir often, until candy thermometer reads 220° or sauce thickens to your liking if you do not have a thermometer. Stir constantly to prevent scorch and use spoon to scrape foam off top. Discard foam.
05. Once jam reaches preferred consistency or 220°, reduce heat and simmer for a few more mins.
06. Remove jam from heat, ladle into jars.
07. Seal and process submerged jars in simmering water for 12-15 minutes.
08. Remove jars from water and line up on a towel-lined countertop or cooling rack, cover with dishtowel and let cool for 12-24 hours. You'll know they're ready when you hear the seals pop (best sound of summer)! Store in a cupboard until opened. Good on cheese or pork chops.

Dill Pickles

Makes about 6 jars. Wide-mouth, pint canning jars work best!

**Ingredients**

- 4 pounds pickling cucumbers 4 to 5 inches long
- 2 teaspoons ground turmeric
- 2 1/2 quarts boiling water
- Fresh Dill enough for ~3 sprigs per jar
- Fresh Garlic Cloves sliced in 1/2 (enough for 2 cloves per jar to your preference)
- 2 1/4 cups distilled white vinegar 5% acidity
- 2 1/4 cups water
- 3 tablespoons non-iodized salt

Instructions

01. Rinse cucumbers with cold water. Trim ends and cut lengthwise in halves or quarters. You can also do rounds!
02. Place cucumbers in large bowl* and sprinkle with turmeric, if using. Pour boiling water over cucumbers, stir in turmeric and let sit for at least an hour. Rinse cucumbers well.
*Turmeric stains - be careful not to spill on countertops or use a bowl that may stain easily.
03. Prep and clean your mason jars, add dill, garlic, and cucumber spears. Trim ends of any cucumbers that did not fit and put cut ends in a separate jar with dill and garlic.
04. Mix your brine of vinegar, water and salt (very important to use non-iodized - we like Diamond or Morton's kosher salt) in a sauce pan and stir over medium-high heat until salt is dissolved. Remove from heat.
05. Ladle hot brine over cucumbers, leaving 1/4-inch of space at the top of the jar. Remove any air bubbles from inside of jar with a wooden skewer or chop stick - do not use metal for this part. Dry rims and add lids then tighten bands to secure jars.
06. Process submerged jars in simmering water for 12-15 minutes.
07. Remove jars from water and line up on a towel-lined countertop or cooling rack, cover with dishtowel and let cool for 12-24 hours. You'll know they're ready when you hear the seals pop (best sound of summer)! Store in a cupboard until opened or in the fridge to guarantee crispy spears.

A tip on canning from Jacin

Tip: If you don't have a water bath canner to process your canned goods, make sure you have a preserving rack to put in the bottom of your stockpot so the jars don't rattle and crack. You can get these at your local hardware store or on Amazon. I also highly recommend a jar lifter to make the entire process much easier in terms of submerging and removing your jars from the hot water.



 @jacinfitzgerald

Speaking of fermenting...

Summer Collaboration

SOMÈRE KITCHEN x TASTY AS FIT

I am absolutely thrilled to be working on a project with an exceptional friend, former client (and client of hers), expert in plant-forward cooking, and inspiration in motherhood and business ownership,

EMILIE BLANCHARD

TASTY AS FIT

Emilie and I can't wait to stir a few things up this summer, including a ridiculously easy sourdough (fermented food) and other game changing recipes to simplify the kitchen. Stay tuned!

On Eating Seasonally

Eating seasonally (and locally when available) is one of the best ways to ensure the freshest organic produce. Plants are not only their most flavorful and nutrient dense during their native season, but our bodies are also intended to be exposed to a variety of foods through the year. Focusing on seasonal ingredients offers the widest nutrient profile to support our bodies all year long, and supports the planet in sustainability.

On Eating Colorfully

Not only does 'eating the rainbow' look beautiful on a plate, colorful fruits and vegetables contain phytonutrients - the naturally occurring substances that give plants their color. Each of these colors and nutrients plays a different role (or roles) in our bodies, and aiming for a variety does a world of good.

Seasonal Produce

SUMMER MENU

RED

bell pepper, cherry, grapefruit, raspberry, radicchio, rhubarb, strawberry, tomato, watermelon

ORANGE

apricot, cantaloupe, carrot, mango, nectarine, orange

YELLOW

banana, lemon, corn, pineapple, summer squash, yellow pepper

GREEN

arugula, asparagus (late spring), avocado, butter lettuce, cabbage, celery, chives, cucumber, green grape, green onion, honeydew, kiwi, lime, green beans, okra, peas (snap/snow), spinach, chard, tomatillo, zucchini

BLUE/PURPLE

blackberry, blueberry, beet, eggplant, plum, red grape, purple carrots, endive

WHITE

cauliflower, garlic, shallot

01, 02, 03

On Keeping Things Simple

The following three recipes - roasted chicken, bone broth (*with fermented miso), and soup - can all be made from the recipe before it. As in, the chicken is used to make the broth, and the broth goes in the soup.

We follow this ritual weekly, using the broth in a variety of soups and recipes - or just for sipping.

01 = Somère Roasted Chicken

Somère Roasted Chicken

Prep Time
5 mins

Active Time
50 mins

Ingredients

- 1 Whole Organic Chicken
- 2 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 1 Lemon sliced
- 4 Tbsp Unsalted Butter
- Salt, to taste
- Bonne Saison, to taste
- 12 Oz Cherry Tomatoes
- 1 Head Garlic halved crosswise
- Optional: Sprigs of Additional Herbs
-



Instructions

01. Preheat oven to 425°F. Coat the bottom of a skillet with olive oil. 02. Add the chicken, breast-side up. Fill the cavity with any sprigs of herbs, salt, seasoning and the ends of the sliced lemon - tie the legs with twine. Rub the outside of the chicken with salt and seasoning, and scatter sliced lemon and butter otop. Place the tomatoes and halved garlic around the chicken.
03. Roast 45-50 minutes. Let stand for 30 minutes. Carve and serve.

This is great to prepare or even cook ahead of time. To prep ahead, follow instructions 1 and 2, and let prepared chicken sit for 1-2 hours before cooking. To cook fully ahead, follow all instructions, and reheat covered over the stove on low heat 5-10 minutes before ready to serve, until juices are bubbling and chicken is warmed.

02 = Miso Bone Broth

Miso Bone Broth

Using Somère Roasted Chicken

Equipment

- Slow Cooker



Ingredients

- Somère Roasted Chicken - bones, juices, tomatoes, garlic head and seasonings
- 4-5 carrots, whole
- 2 sticks celery
- 1 onion, halved
- 1/4 cup miso (white or yellow)

Instructions

01. Add all ingredients to slow cooker. Cook on low heat for 10 hours or overnight. Double strain using a cheese cloth over a mesh strainer. Store in airtight container, refrigerated. Use for soups, braising, baby food blends, or for sipping (hot).

03 = Asparagus & Roasted Garlic Bisque

Asparagus & Roasted Garlic Bisque

Ingredients

- 1 bunch asparagus (white or green) washed, bottom thirds removed
- 3 shallots peeled and roughly chopped
- 1 head garlic
- 3 tbsp butter or ghee
- salt & pepper (and/or *bonne saison*) to taste
- 4 cups bone broth (or vegetable broth) *see miso bone broth for homemade recipe
- 13 oz coconut milk
- juice from 1 lemon
- 1 tbsp nutritional yeast



Instructions

01. Roast the garlic. Preheat oven to 350°F. Cut off 1/3 of the garlic head crosswise. Wrap in foil (or parchment paper tied with twine) and roast 45 minutes.
02. Meanwhile, heat butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add shallots and cook until fragrant and translucent (~5 min). Cut asparagus spears into 1 inch pieces (set aside at least a few heads for garnish). Add asparagus, broth, and salt/seasonings to the pot. Bring to a boil, then cover and reduce to a simmer for 30 minutes.
03. Wearing an oven mitt, squeeze the roasted garlic into the pot. Use an immersion blender to blend the veggies and broth together. Stir in coconut milk, nutritional yeast and lemon juice over low heat to warm. Adjust salt to taste.
04. Ladle the bisque into bowls, garnish with saved asparagus heads, serve hot.

Thank You!

FINAL NOTE

I cannot begin to thank you enough for subscribing to Somère Kitchen's first publication, Somère Reading. These will continue to come with the changing of the seasons, along with new monthly recipes and tips, notes, & stories along the way.

I would absolutely love any feedback about what we want more of, less of, different ideas, and questions I can answer for future newsletters. You can email me at lainie@somerekitchen.com or find me on Instagram [@somerekitchen](https://www.instagram.com/somerekitchen).

I look so forward to hearing back & spending time in the kitchen together.