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Enjoying the fall garden's bountiful harvest

Locally grown produce makes for yummy fall treats



Photo Credit: Corbis

When the calendar turns to fall months, temperatures drop and local football teams come to mind. With the approach of the cooler weather, many of us also begin to yearn for the warmth of comfort foods like hearty soups and stews or freshly baked pies, but these traditional favorites need not be boring and unhealthy. A modern take on comfort foods uses what is fresh and available during the season, but also explores new ingredients and stretches your imagination to look at old ingredients or recipes in new ways.

Regardless of where in the country you live, fall produce is becoming abundantly available. For some regions, families have begun making their annual pilgrimage to the local orchard to pick apples or pears, and pumpkins are maturing in the backyard garden waiting to be turned into jack-o-lanterns. But even if these crops aren't possible to grow in your area, fresh autumn favorites like pumpkins, apples, parsnips and kale are still most likely making frequent appearances at local farmers markets and grocery stores.

Roast them, stew them, can them or bake them. Pumpkin, squash, root vegetables, apples and pears make for great cuisine that the whole family can enjoy. For a new take on old favorites, try adding rutabaga slices to your au gratin potato recipe or pop some cubed squash in while cooking up your family's favorite beef stew.

Get the whole family involved and take the kids along to the market to find new vegetables to sample. Getting everyone interested in new flavors can be exciting. Sample some unfamiliar items and find new favorites. Kids will enjoy

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Women's frat builds bonds

Chi Psi Omega strives for community service

by Matt Comer :: matt@goqnotes.com

Their motto is "Forged in fire, from the ashes we rise," and Mel Dixon, Mecca Kerr, Samantha Mercer and Diana Nutter are bound and determined to make a positive impact.

The four lesbian women of Chi Psi Omega Fraternity say they were inspired to create their new group after not-so-pleasant experiences in another.

"We'd all pledged and crossed into another LGBT Greek organization that just didn't work out for us," says Nutter, the fraternity's treasurer. "So, we decided to start our own."

Chi Psi Omega isn't a collegiate fraternity. The group's members say that doesn't really matter.

"I don't really think there's a big difference between social and collegiate fraternities," says Dixon, Chi Psi Omega's events chair. "We're all out here for the same cause. I do think with us being a social fraternity we can reach more people outside of a school and do more in a community."

But, the fraternity does differ from other traditional Greek organizations. Unlike other groups for women, Chi Psi Omega isn't called a "sorority" and they refer to their members as "brothers." The group, the co-founders say, is meant to provide a comfortable place to interact with and support other dominant, lesbian women. Regardless of the differences, the results are the same and the group's members stress unity and community service.

"Our purpose is to come together for all the community — not just the gay or straight communities — and try to bridge the gaps," Nutter says.

Founded in June, the group has already participated in an array of fundraisers and community service projects. They've held a carwash benefit for the Regional AIDS Interfaith Network (RAIN) and was able to raise money for school supplies for children at Elon Homes. They've even joined the city's Adopt-a-Street program, pledging to take care of Hamilton St. — right in front of the LGBT Community Center of Charlotte at the NC Music Factory.

"Community service is huge for me," says Mercer, the fraternity's president. "It's the small things we do that make a big impact in the community."

Chi Psi Omega has embarked on a mission to recruit new members. They say the group needs to grow so that it can have a larger, more positive impact.

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WINSTON-SALEM PRIDE

Community members took to the streets of downtown Winston-Salem on Saturday, Oct. 15 for their inaugural, locally-produced LGBT Pride festival and parade. The events were a first since the Twin City hosted the statewide NC Pride in 1996. Organizers said 5,000 attended the events with relatively few protesters.

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25th
anniversary
1986-2011