



THE DANE COUNTY
FARMERS' MARKET
COOKBOOK

LOCAL FOODS, GLOBAL FLAVORS

TERESE ALLEN



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LITTLE CREEK PRESS
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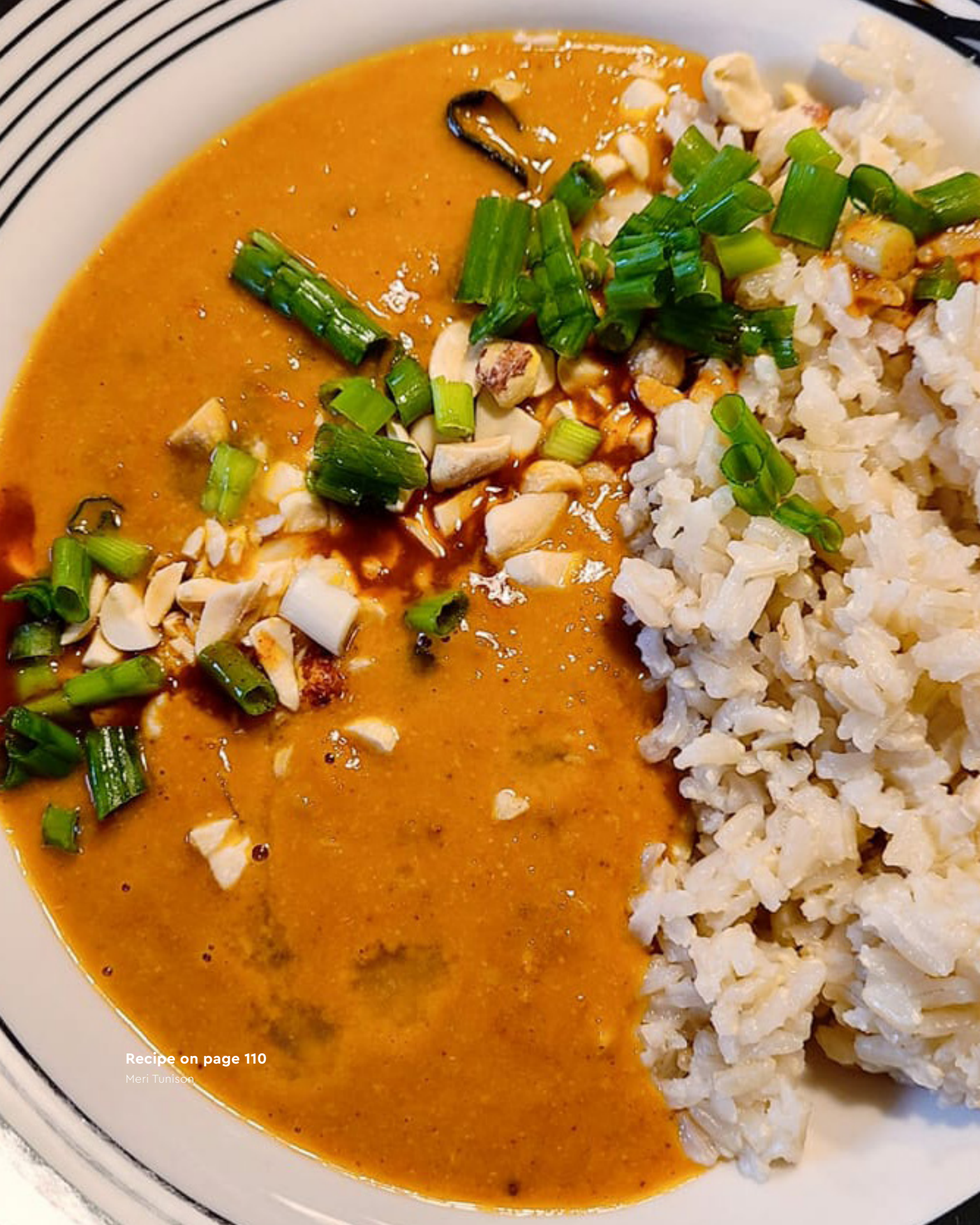
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In gratitude to growers and cooks







And in joyful memory of market lover

Kathy Trudell



Recipe on page 110
Meri Tunison

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Lona Alsum



ALSUM'S CHEESY CORN DIP

10 OR MORE SERVINGS (ABOUT 3 1/2 CUPS DIP)

Hearty stews and slow-simmered soups are fine in winter, but during those long, often dull-tasting weeks, do you ever find yourself craving something sun-kissed and summery? Yeah, we thought so. Alsum Sweet Corn to the rescue here. It's a fourth-generation family farm that offers fresh corn in season and frozen corn year-round at the market.

This recipe came to be one afternoon when Lona Alsum and her daughter Brittany did some experimenting to create a special dip for a family gathering. Now it's one of their clan's most requested recipes and a fond memory of Alsum creativeness.

"By adding different spices from almost any ethnicity to our basic recipe, you can create your own unique blend and taste," says Lona. Think: Garam masala or curry powder; cumin and fresh cilantro; Cajun seasoning; dill and caraway. To hoist the heat, replace the plain frozen corn called for in the recipe with their "Sweet Heat Corn," which has jalapeños in it.

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese

1 bag (16 ounces) frozen sweet corn, thawed in the bag with its juices

1/3 cup sour cream

1/2 cup shredded cheddar

1/4 cup coarsely grated Parmesan

1 tablespoon dried oregano

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

1/2 teaspoon dried chile flakes (optional)

1/2 teaspoon garlic powder (optional)

Tortilla chips

"...you can create your own unique blend and taste."

Place cream cheese in a saucepan over medium-low flame and let it heat up, stirring occasionally, until it's almost melted, 5 to 6 minutes. Add corn with its juices, sour cream, cheddar and Parmesan. Continue to heat the mixture, stirring often, for another 2 to 4 minutes. When it's combined well, stir in oregano and black pepper, and the dried chile flakes and garlic powder, if using. Serve hot or warm with tortilla chips. Leftovers, if there are any, are easily reheated in the microwave (and they're even good cold).



YAKITORI SHISHITO PEPPERS

2 TO 4 SERVINGS

Ever since shishito peppers hit the market scene in the late 2010s, there's been no going back. Thin-skinned, nearly seedless and shaped like slender, crooked thumbs, with stems that double as built-in handles, shishitos make the perfect appetizer when blistered whole over high heat and served with a dipping sauce such as sriracha mayo, sesame sour cream or lemon aioli. Their heat level is low—usually, that is. Every once in a while, a few rogue spicy ones will flash-mob a batch of peppers, creating a good-natured game of Russian roulette for diners. This is fun if you like surprises; otherwise, proceed with caution.

The recipe here is from Gilbert Altschul, chef-owner of Grampa's Pizzeria, who frequently enjoyed shishitos at a *yakitori* restaurant in San Diego when he lived there. (Yakitori is Japanese skewered grilled chicken, typically eaten as street food or in casual restaurants.) In Madison, when he began finding shishitos at the DCFM, he recreated the memorable flavors with this recipe.

Gil serves the zesty bites on a wooden board and washes them down with Japanese lager. "A little drizzle of Thai chile fish sauce is great, too, for those who want to up the heat," he adds.

NOTE: Several ingredients called for here may sound unfamiliar. Look for them in Asian food shops and at larger grocery stores.

28 to 30 shishito peppers

About 2 teaspoons *shoyu* (Japanese soy sauce)

About 1 teaspoon *yuzu* sauce (or *ponzu*, a sweet-salty sauce made from citrusy yuzu fruit)

1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon grated lime zest

About 1/4 teaspoon *togarashi* (zingy, toasty Japanese seasoning mix)

1 to 2 teaspoons *katsuobushi* (dried bonito flakes)

Prepare very hot coals in a charcoal grill. Skewer shishitos onto long bamboo skewers.

Blister the peppers over the coals, turning them often as they char. This should take only a minute or two. While they're still hot, remove the peppers from the skewers and put them in a mixing bowl. Working quickly, drizzle in the *shoyu*, *yuzu* sauce, lime zest and *togarashi*, and toss well. Place peppers on a wooden board and sprinkle liberally with bonito flakes. If the peppers are still nice and hot the bonito will "dance" from the heat. Serve immediately.



Lucinda Ranney



Lucinda Ranney

MUHAMMARA

(ROASTED RED PEPPER & WALNUT DIP)

MAKES 2 TO 3 CUPS

"Be careful! This is quite addictive," warns DCFM shopper Betsy Abramson. Roasted red peppers, toasted walnuts, garlic and Middle Eastern seasonings combine in a rich, spicy dip. Use it with toasted pita chips, crudité's or crackers, in omelets, on grilled meats or fish, or even as a pizza sauce.

Muhammara, which means "reddened" in Arabic, originated in Syria and Lebanon and can be found on many a mezze platter around the Middle East. Traditional recipes call for a little pomegranate molasses, but pure maple syrup is a lot easier to find in our corner of the world, and it works well, too.

Muhammara freezes nicely, Betsy says. "So grab four of those beautiful DCFM red peppers at the end of the season and double your batch."

- 2 large red bell peppers
- 1 1/2 cups raw walnuts
- 3 medium garlic cloves
- 2 teaspoons paprika or 1 teaspoon Aleppo pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon dried chile flakes (or less if you're not into spicy)
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup or pomegranate molasses
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Additional olive oil, optional



**"Be careful!
This is quite
addictive..."**

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking pan with foil or parchment paper, place the peppers on it and roast them, turning them every 10 minutes or so until the skin blackens and blisters. Place them in a bowl, cover with plastic wrap and let stand for at least a half hour. (This creates steam to loosen the skins.)

Meanwhile, decrease oven heat to 350 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment and spread the walnuts on it. Roast the nuts but watch them carefully so they don't burn. It should take 10 to 12 minutes at most. Remove from the pan and allow to cool.

Peel the red peppers with a paring knife or your fingers; scrape off and discard stem and seeds. Coarsely chop the peppers.

Switch on a food processor and drop the walnuts and garlic through the feed tube. Then toss in everything else, including the red peppers, but not the additional olive oil. Keep it running until the mixture is smooth, pausing once or twice to scrape down the sides of the work bowl. Taste and adjust seasonings as you like.

Transfer mixture to a bowl, cover it and, if time permits, let it chill in the fridge for a couple hours to develop flavor. Return it to room temperature before serving. To serve, drizzle a little more olive oil over the surface, if desired.



Lois Bergerson



MEE'S GREEN BEANS WITH GROUND BEEF, GARLIC AND THAI PEPPERS

6 SERVINGS

DCFM member Phil Yang shared this Hmong specialty, a recipe from his mother, Mee, who spent three decades growing and selling market vegetables while raising a family of eight children. In 2018, Phil began offering sweet pastries from a second family business at the market, named Yummee Treats. Appropriately, the bakery is named after Phil's mom, combined with a word that connotes the pleasure of good food.

Ingredient amounts in this recipe are purposefully approximate. Hmong families have a penchant for the intensity of garlic and hot peppers, for example, so are more likely to use the larger amounts given here. But feel free to adjust for personal taste. Serve the dish with jasmine rice and a bowl of fiery chile sauce (see page 127), for the heat-seekers at your table.

1 to 2 1/2 pounds fresh green beans

3 to 4 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 pound ground beef

3 to 5 cloves garlic, sliced or finely chopped

3 to 5 dried Thai hot peppers

1 to 2 teaspoons of sea salt or regular salt

Rinse green beans well, trim off the stem ends, and cut them in half.

Heat oil in an extra-large, heavy skillet over high flame. Add the ground beef, garlic and Thai peppers; cook, stirring often, until meat is beginning to brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the green beans and 1 teaspoon salt; toss and cook them until browned in spots and as tender as you prefer, 5 to 10 minutes. Add additional salt to taste. Transfer mixture to a large platter and serve.



HMONG COOKING

Based in an ancient farming culture, Hmong cuisine features a huge variety of health-giving, seasonal vegetables and simple, vibrantly flavored preparations. Hmong immigrants to Wisconsin began to influence farmers markets—and the diversity of foodways in the region—not long after they came to the state as refugees of the Vietnam War.

At the market, vendors supply such familiar Asian favorites as cilantro, cucumbers and hot peppers, but they offer more exotic fare, too, from curly pea shoot tendrils and gnarly-looking bitter melons to lemongrass and foot-long asparagus beans. Frugality is almost an art form in Hmong culture. Gardeners harvest pea shoots and the prunings from squash plants, then sell them by the bunch to be used fresh in salads, stir-fried as a side dish or simmered in nourishing broths.



Terese Allen

Hmong diners eat a great deal of cabbage, lettuce, cucumber, squash and many varieties of nutritious greens. Most meals include fresh herbs, especially mint, basil and cilantro. Green onions and garlic flavor many dishes. For a fragrant, lemony touch in soups or boiled chicken, cooks add slender green stalks of lemongrass. The very young shoots are tender enough to be finely minced and added to stir-fries, but mature lemongrass, cut into large pieces and used more like bay leaves, is typically removed before serving.



Lucinda Ranney

Another favorite crop is Thai eggplant, an egg-sized, grassy-green orb that has a burst of white veins on the base and a stem that extends claw-like around the top half of the fruit. Small ones can be eaten raw with salt and pepper for a crunchy and pleasantly bitter snack, and any size can be cooked with such additions as chicken, lemongrass, garlic or basil.



Terese Allen

Like many Southeast Asians, Hmong people appreciate bitter-tasting foods, and favor bitter melon, a summer specialty. It looks like a pale-green, deeply wrinkled cucumber but is used like zucchini, especially in stir-fries with chicken. The strong flavor can be tamed for less adventurous palates by salting it as you would eggplant. Your first taste—pre-salted or not—can be a shock, but like hot peppers or quinine water, bitter melons have a distinctive flavor that could become a passion.



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Rice is fundamental to the Hmong diet. Some people eat long-grain white rice at every meal, whereas mellow-flavored sticky or "sweet" rice is an occasional treat. Spicy chiles are another essential ingredient. At mealtime, families place bowls of very spicy dipping sauce strategically around the table. The sauce is often made with Thai chiles—a mere inch or two in length and almost overpowering to the Western tongue. They're no problem for Hmong diners, however; in fact, some will tell you that store-bought hot peppers are not hot enough! You've got to get them fresh from the grower.

For an excellent cookbook about both traditional and Hmong American cooking, seek out *Cooking from the Heart: The Hmong Kitchen in America*, by Sami Scriptor and Sheng Yang.



Lois Bergerson

SHOP AT THE FARMERS MARKET. COOK AND DINE FROM AROUND THE WORLD.

Hundreds of Wisconsin growers and thousands of shoppers gathering weekly around the white-domed State Capitol in Madison. An ever-growing diversity of farm-fresh crops, world-class cheese, pastured meats and specialty products. Heartfelt stories and dishes from the vendors, shoppers and chefs who build cultural and community bonds at one of the nation's largest, most renowned farmers markets. It all comes together in this collection of bold-flavored, internationally focused recipes cooked up from local ingredients.

All proceeds benefit the Dane County Farmers' Market.

"Recipes and stories that invite us to fall in love with the food of the Upper Midwest all over again, and to truly live the connection between land, people and table."

~Luke Zahm, host of PBS's "Wisconsin Foodie"

"A capacious, diverse exploration that captures the ever-changing array of our foodways with the joy and care befitting the beloved gathering spot."

~Michelle Wildgen, author of *Wine People* and *Bread and Butter*

"Makes me even prouder to be from Wisconsin."

~State Representative and chef Francesca Hong

