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August 25, 2006

So Much On My Plate - Figs



This week on So Much On My Plate I talked about fresh figs and what to do with them. The figs in this photo are green figs from the tree in my backyard, and I'm having a bumper crop this year, although they seem to be ripening more slowly than usual. I received some advice that recommended more watering, so I've really been soaking the roots for the past few days, as it has been very dry in the Cowichan Valley all summer long. I think the variety I have is the Desert King, which are apparently easily propagate from cuttings.

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For more about fresh figs, dried figs and what to do with them, check out the [California Fig Advisory Board](#) website, as most of the figs commercially available are grown in California. There are also some great fresh fig recipes on [Epicurious.com](#). For today's show, I made two recipes. They are so simple you don't really need a list of ingredients or a formal recipe:

Figs Wrapped in Spicy Pancetta: This recipe was inspired by my friend [Nathan Fong](#), who served these as an appetizer at a recent dinner party. Cut your figs into quarters, lengthwise, and wrap them in spicy pancetta, or prosciutto, or even thin-sliced salami. Skewer the meat and fig together with a small wooden skewer and bake at 400F on a parchment-paper lined baking sheet for about 8 to 10 minutes. The meat should release some of its fat and start to crisp, without burning. Serve immediately.

Figs Topped with Blue Cheese and Balsamic Cream: Cut figs in half lengthwise. If they are very round, cut a small slice off the rounded bottom so they will sit upright on the baking sheet. Place a small cube of your favourite blue cheese on top of each fig half. (you could also top with a walnut half) Like the pancetta-wrapped figs, place on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet and roast at 400F until the cheese has melted onto the fig. Remove from oven and drizzle with cream of balsamic vinegar. (available at Italian grocers and delis) Or you could use honey. Serve immediately.



One other idea you can try if you have a fig tree in your backyard, or a friend with a tree, is to take the largest leaf you can find, stem attached, and brush the upper side of the leaf with olive oil. In the centre of the leaf, place a small round of soft cheese, Brie or Camembert style, and wrap the leaf around it. You can then use the stem to poke through the leaf to 'seal' the package. Put on your BBQ on medium heat until the cheese just starts to melt. The flavour of the fig leaf will gently infuse the cheese, and it makes for great presentation with some sliced baguette or crackers, as you can just scoop the warm, soft cheese onto the cracker with a knife. Enjoy!

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What would really good figs look like?

Posted by: [HungryVancouver](#) | [August 25, 2006 at 10:36 PM](#)

Mmmm that blue cheese one looks awesome. I'll have to try it.

I also recommend creamy stuffed figs from the Weekly Dish food blog. (<http://www.weeklydish.com/2006/08/22/ode-to-figs/>)

Now I've got to go tune in to the CBC to hear to what you've said about figs.

Posted by: [Rebeca](#) | [August 26, 2006 at 01:18 AM](#)

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