



Julia Hansen

One of my favorite things to do on Saturday mornings in the fall is to walk down to the farmers market on the Square. Local farmers bring fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs to the Square and typically sell them at a lower price than you can find in local grocery stores. It is nice to know you have bought locally instead of having bought corporate. Typically there

Cooking with Julia: Salsa Recipes

are cucumbers, potatoes, rutabaga, onions, green beans, turnips, zucchini, lettuce, apples, peaches, pumpkins, watermelons, berries, cantaloupe, corn, tomatoes and lots of other fresh produce.

The people who set up the stands are friendly and interesting to talk to. They always are willing to explain unfamiliar foods like white pattypan squash, Asian pears and lemon cucumbers. I saw all three of these last Saturday.

When entertaining friends, a good thing to have around is chips and salsa. Nearly all the ingredients needed for the salsa recipes here can be found at the farmers market. So take a walk, shop locally and enjoy!

Aunt Kathy's Salsa

Ingredients:

2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1/2 cup cilantro leaves, roughly chopped
1 jalapeno, roughly chopped, remove seeds
4 green onions, roughly chopped
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoons garlic salt
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1 1/2 teaspoons cumin
1/8 teaspoon white pepper

Directions:

Combine all ingredients in a food processor or blender and serve.



Mango Salsa

Recipe courtesy of Ellie Krieger; the Food Network

Ingredients:

1 mango, peeled and diced
1/2 cup peeled, diced cucumber
1 tablespoon finely chopped jalapeno
1/3 cup diced red onion
1 tablespoon lime juice
1/3 cup roughly chopped cilantro leaves
Salt and pepper

Directions:

1. Combine the mango, cucumber, jalapeno, red onion, lime juice and cilantro leaves and mix well.
2. Season with salt and pepper to taste.



Black Bean Salsa

Ingredients:

1 15 oz can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 15 oz can whole kernel corn, drained
1 large tomato, chopped
1/2 cup sour cream
1 green pepper, diced
1/3 cup cilantro leaves, chopped
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1 small red onion diced

Directions:

Combine all ingredients.



Ditch campus to find romance

There is no denying the fact that Kirksville can be a little lame at times (or all the time). But that doesn't mean dates have to be. Instead of resigning to spending the evening eating at the dining hall and going back to the lounge to watch a movie together, try out some of these more adventurous date ideas.

Thousand Hills State Park is my favorite place to spend some personal time, be it with a significant other or just a friend. The park offers countless options for people with all sorts of tastes, from hiking the beautiful trails to just sitting and chatting lakeside. For dinner, it is convenient to drive to the restaurant and get a table overlooking the water, or for more do-it-yourself couples, it's fun to build a fire and roast some hot dogs or grill hamburgers. Staking out a campsite is an easy way to extend dinner into all hours of the night without worrying about closing time, and doing this also opens up other nighttime activities like stargazing or snuggling in a tent. In addition, Thousand Hills has a small beach for swimming, plenty of places to fish, swing sets and scenic viewpoints.

Although it's fun to go out to eat and there

are a few decent options in town, sometimes the best way to spend the evening is to stay in. Pick a recipe — one of your favorites or a new one you'd like to try — and make it yourself. Preparing a meal for your sweetheart can be a fun surprise or something you can do together. Don't feel like this isn't an option in the residence halls — utensils and other items can be checked out from the front desk, and there almost always is an empty kitchen around.

For those who just want to get away, there are places to go, believe it or not. On a whim, a boyfriend and I decided to drive across the border to Illinois for dinner. The ultimate destination wasn't all that thrilling, but the excitement came from the spontaneity of our decision and the element of exploration. Columbia also has numerous options if you have a few hours and don't mind using the gas to get there. With a selection of restaurants and activities far superior to Kirksville's, it is an excellent place to spend the day on a weekend or a not-so-busy weeknight.

If you and your honey are into sports, be active. Go to the Student Recreation

Center together or take a walk around the neighborhoods. Take a bike ride to a park or play tennis in the courts on campus. There is no need to stay indoors on a nice day, even for those who are not athletically inclined. People watch under a tree on the Quad or set out a blanket to do homework together. It might not be the most romantic thing to do, but there is plenty of quality time to be found even in mundane daily activities.

As far as entertainment goes, it might seem that Kirksville does not always have much going on, but just because it isn't a stop for national tours does not mean it doesn't have an entertainment life of its own. Student groups such as dancers and musicians frequently perform on campus, and local bands often set up gigs in restaurants or bars. The Student Activities Board regularly brings in comedians and other entertainment, so keep an eye out for these visitors.

Don't be worried that there isn't anything to do in Kirksville. There are plenty of ways to spend romantic, secluded evenings or nights out for a more lively time.



Kelly Schute

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to talk**

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