

Cooking with Julia: Strawberry Walnut Spinach Salad



JULIA HANSEN

When I lived with my older sister in Portland, Ore., the summer after my sophomore year, we did cool things like camp and hike around Crater Lake National Park, pick blueberries on Sauvies Island, visit a Rembrandt art exhibit and spend entire days in Powell's Books in downtown Portland. In order for me to do all these cool things, I had to get a job. After applying to about 50 places within walking distance of my sister's

house, I was hired at a European-style open-air produce market about half a mile from home. Although initially it wasn't my top choice for a job, it turned out to be a great experience, and I learned more than I ever would have imagined about common and exotic produce. I learned what jicama, parsnips, celery root and daikon radishes are. I learned how to thump a watermelon to see if it's good. I also learned about hotness of peppers and that it is wise to avoid habanero peppers. My favorite part of the summer, however, was when the berry farmers would come in every morning and drop off truckloads of marionberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries and strawberries. I remember my boss telling me I'd never tasted a really good berry unless I had tried berries from the Willamette Valley. He was right. When the fresh strawberries started coming in, I started eating. I must have eaten my body weight in berries that summer, which was great. Because of the abundance of berries I learned some recipes that included them. This recipe might sound a bit odd with spinach, berries and walnuts, but it's delicious. We might not get Willamette Valley berries in Kirksville in the winter, but I suppose for now California strawberries will have to do.

Ingredients:

1 pint strawberries, thinly sliced
1/2 pint cherry or pear tomatoes, halved
4 cups fresh spinach
1/4 cup walnut pieces
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons raspberry vinegar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon fresh ground pepper

Directions:

1. Put spinach in a large bowl.
2. Whisk together olive oil, vinegar, salt and pepper in a small bowl.
3. Pour dressing over spinach. Add walnuts and tomatoes.
4. Gently toss the salad to distribute the dressing over the spinach, walnuts and tomatoes.
5. Garnish salad with strawberries.



Columnist questions career paths

Little known fact: it is possible to fail at T-ball. In first and second grade I struggled through two seasons of the dreaded sport, managing to make a fool of my 6-year-old self each time I picked up the bat. After similar catastrophic encounters with volleyball, gymnastics, basketball and soccer, I found a place in cross-country running — mostly because it requires no coordination.

Before discovering my athletic haven, though, I listened to dozens of parental reminders that, "The only thing that matters is having fun." I'm truly grateful for the support, Mom and Dad, but we all know how bad I was. I doubt Michael Phelps' parents had to tell him that before swim practice.

That mantra equally can be applicable in other aspects of life. In general, I've encountered people living by two standards: either the substance of their accomplishments or their personal fulfillment.

For example, I (and I suspect other Truman students — we're all super-smart and competitive, right?) spent quite a bit of my high school career pursuing scholarships, internships and leadership positions in an effort to get into a good school, get that school paid for, get a great job, make more money and, only if I'm really, really good, find personal satisfaction.

The fallacy in this accomplishment-based paradigm is that success alone rarely leads to good living. Think of Scrooge or Daddy Warbucks — sooner or later you're going to need Tiny Tim or a precocious orphan to cheer you up.

It's difficult, but I've got to try to turn off the "Type-A" part of me that's chasing the prestigious career and simply follow my passion. Figuring out what that might be is imperative, now more than ever, as my student life comes to an end and the abyss of the future looms. I'm one of many with no idea what to do, where to go or how to get there.

My friend has wanted a job in speech pathology since eighth grade, but the evolution of my ambitions has taken more time. At five, I was destined for Hollywood. Two years later I was bent on working with horses (in that ubiquitous horse-crazy phase many a child can relate to). My freshman year of high school career paper covered the duties of U.S. ambassadors. Then journalism. Or publishing. Or public relations? Or maybe all I really want to do is own a bakery like Maggie Gyllenhaal in "Stranger Than Fiction."

So how does one reconcile PR and pastries, saving for retirement and saving the

world? Everyone's looking for a niche, and the search tends to be a desperate one — after all, the consequences of not finding it could mean 40 years or more of soul-stifling labor.

First, get out of the mindset that jobs and titles need to reflect (or supplement) how talented or intelligent you are. Make your career work for you, not the other way around. There is no shame in graduating from Truman and baking cupcakes for a living if that's what makes me happiest, just as CEOs of multi-national companies need not be bashful about their hefty paychecks if the work they do is personally satisfying.

The best option might be to consider careers as we consider significant others: dating around to find "the one." The rules remain the same. Keep an open mind, but stay true to standards, gauge whether the satisfaction of the relationship is worth the effort and give it some time before passing judgment, but in the end, do what feels right. And remember, the career that makes you cry doesn't deserve your tears, and the career that does won't make you cry.

I only can hope to spend a lifetime doing what I love and doing it well, whatever it might be. After all, the only thing that matters is having fun.

Peace
of mind



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Zoe Martin



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in SUB Conference Room:
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