

UCDAVIS
OLIVE OIL

Sunset Magazine
April, 2008

*California's prettiest small town P.38

Sunset

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IN SEASON

Sugar snap peas

These crisp beauties have a fleeting season—they're at their peak of sweet tenderness in the spring and early summer. The peas, pod and all, are delicious just eaten raw; here are a few other ways to enjoy them.

STIR-FRIED Heat a scant amount of peanut or canola oil in a wok or high-sided frying pan over high heat. Add some minced garlic and cook 10 seconds, then add peas and cook until bright green and crisp-tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Drizzle with sesame oil and sprinkle with salt and toasted sesame seeds.

DIPPED Blanch peas in boiling, salted water until just tender, then drain and chill. Make a simple dip of crème fraîche, lemon juice and zest, minced garlic, fresh herbs, and some salt and pepper. Serve the peas alongside as a simple hors d'oeuvre.

AS A SIDE DISH Sauté sugar snaps in butter, add a splash of cream, and cook until cream has reduced. Add julienned prosciutto or cooked, crumbled pancetta, then season with salt, pepper, and a pinch of freshly grated nutmeg. Serve alongside roasted chicken or on top of pasta.

AS A CHOPPED SALAD Cut blanched sugar snap peas into 1/2-in. lengths and combine with blanched asparagus (cut into similar-size pieces) and halved cherry tomatoes. Dress with an herb vinaigrette and sprinkle a little shaved parmesan cheese on top.

This Western olive oil graduates with honors.

For decades, the nearly 2,000 graceful old olive trees at the University of California, Davis, were a campus menace, dropping fruit and turning pavements into an oil-slicked hazard for bicyclists. But now the school harvests those wayward olives to produce three artisanal olive oils it can barely keep in stock. Our favorite is the Wolfskill (\$15), a buttery, grassy blend that gets its complexity from roughly 50 varieties of olives, many of them rare in California. oliveoil.ucdavis.edu or 530/752-6846.



EASY RECIPE

Radish and sorrel salad

For a mere handful of green leaves, sorrel packs a powerful culinary punch. When paired with radishes and a bit of ginger, its fresh, lemony, herbaceous flavor lets you know that spring is finally here.

Trim, rinse, and dry 3 bunches **radishes** (30 to 36 radishes). Slice radishes thinly and put in a bowl. Add 1 tbsp. **rice vinegar**, 1/2 tsp. grated **ginger**, and 1/4 tsp. **salt**. Toss to combine. Lay 10 to 12 (about 1 box or small bunch) **sorrel** leaves in a stack and slice them crosswise into thin ribbons. Toss sorrel with radishes. Add additional salt to taste. Serve immediately.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: ROB D. BRODMAN, LEO GONG (2); FOOD STYLING: DAN BECKER