

International Earth Day – 22 April

Historical background:

In September 1969, U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson announced that in the spring of 1970 there would be a nationwide grassroots demonstration on the environment. He proposed the nationwide environmental protest to thrust the environment onto the national agenda." "It was a gamble," he recalls, "but it worked." Five months before the first April 22 Earth Day, on Sunday, November 30, 1969, *The New York Times* carried an article reporting on the rising tide of environmental events::

"Rising concern about the environmental crisis is sweeping the nation's campuses with an intensity that may be on its way to eclipsing student discontent over the war in Vietnam...a national day of observance of environmental problems...is being planned for next spring...when a nationwide environmental 'teach-in'...is planned...."

Earth Day is a name used for two different observances, both held annually during spring in the northern hemisphere, and autumn in the southern hemisphere. These are intended to inspire awareness of and appreciation for the Earth's environment. The equinoctial Earth Day is celebrated on the March equinox to mark the precise moment of mid-spring in the Northern Hemisphere, and of mid-autumn in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Ecology Flag was created by cartoonist Ron Cobb, and was published for the first time in October 25, 1969. It is green and yellow. The flag originally had a



symbol that was a combination of the letters "E" and "O" taken from the words "Environment" and "Organism", respectively. Later flags used either a Theta because of its historic use as a warning symbol, or the Peace Symbol. Theta would later become associated with Earth Day.

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1. **Reduce, reuse and recycle all day long.** Take your drink container with you, and don't use any disposable plates or cutlery. Recycle all the things you do use for the day or find other uses for things that you no longer use. Carry a cloth bag for carrying things in and recycle your plastic bags.
2. **Wear green and/or brown.** Dress in environmental colors for the day; think "tree"!
3. **Engage others in conversations** about your environmental concerns.
4. **Cook a special Earth Day meal.** Plan a menu that uses locally produced foods, is healthy and has minimal impact on the environment. Favour vegetable and bean products, as these use less resources to grow than mass-farmed meat. If you still would like meat, look for locally produced, organic meat. Try and have organic food. Decorate the table with recycled decorations made by you.
5. **Remember: Every day is Earth Day.** Anything to help our environment is a perfect thing to do on Earth Day and every day. Don't restrict yourself to just one day a year; learn about how you can make a difference to environmental protection all the time. And put it into practice - every day!

By Earth Be Blessed
(Jan L. Richardson)

May you know the embrace of Earth.

May she teach you the wisdom of
time:

the unfolding of Spring
the ripening of Summer
the turning of Autumn
the shedding of Winter.

May she teach you the wisdom of
intimacy:

seed embraced by warm, dark soil
crevice traced by insistent stream
raindrop clinging to new, soft leaf
precious stones in hidden places.

May she teach you the wisdom of
grace:

flowers entwining fallen oak
healing gifts of common "weeds"
grain for bread, fruit for wine
dancing stars through barren
branches.

May you be known in Earth's
embrace.

Amen.

Minestrone Soup

Ingredients

- 2 onions
- salt, pepper
- 400g can cannellini beans
- 3 carrots
- 2 cans chopped tomatoes
- 3 sticks celery
- 3 beef stock cubes
- 5 cups water
- 250g potatoes
- 45g butter
- 2 zucchini
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 90g green beans
- 250g cabbage

Method

Peel and finely chop the onions; peel and dice potatoes and carrots; chop celery; dice zucchini; chop beans and shred cabbage.

Heat the oil and butter in a large soup pot. Add the onions and cook gently for a good ten minutes until the onion is soft and golden brown. Add the carrots and cook for two minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the potatoes and the celery and cook for two minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the zucchini, beans and cabbage and cook in the same manner. Pour in the water, the stock cubes and the chopped tomatoes. Stir well. Bring to the boil and reduce heat.

Cover and simmer for 1 1/2 hours until the soup is thick and smooth in flavour. Ten minutes before the soup is cooked, add the can of drained and rinsed cannellini beans and stir well. Season with salt and pepper

Pumpkin Bread

Serve with soup or as a starter or snack. It could almost pass as cake...

Ingredients

- 1 cup toasted pumpkin seeds (pepitas)
- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- pinch nutmeg
- 2 cups cooked pumpkin
- ½ cup sugar
- 1/3 cup treacle brown sugar (demarera)
- 1/3 cup sunflower oil
- 2 large egg
- ¾ cup yoghurt or buttermilk

Method

Preheat oven to 160 degrees. Toast pepitas by placing them on a baking tray in a 140 degree oven for 10 minutes. Keep a careful eye on the pepitas, they roast quickly. Remove from the oven and let cool. Retain ½ cup aside to sprinkle on bread. In a food processor, pulse chop the remaining ½ cup to a course consistency. Puree pumpkin and set aside. Mix dry ingredients together. Stir sugars and pumpkin together. Process oil and eggs in food processor with a metal blade. Add dry ingredients, then pumpkin and pulse to blend. Add buttermilk or yoghurt. Line a loaf tin 15 cm with baking paper. Spray with oil. Bake bread for about 50 minutes or until well browned. Allow to cool in tin. Bread freezes very well, reheat if desired. Serves 8.

Pesto lamb with lentil & spinach salad**Cooking Time**

30 minutes

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 2 lamb racks (8 cutlets on each rack), excess fat trimmed
- 125g (1/2 cup) basil pesto (see related recipe)
- Salt & freshly ground black pepper
- 70g baby spinach leaves
- 1 x 400g can Bio Nature organic brown lentils, rinsed, drained
- 2 ripe tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 2 tbs extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbs fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C. Place the lamb racks in a baking tray, locking the racks together. Evenly coat the lamb with pesto and season with salt and pepper. Bake in oven for 25 minutes for medium or until cooked to your liking.
2. Meanwhile, combine the spinach, lentils and tomato in a large bowl. Whisk the oil, lemon juice and mustard in a small jug until well combined. Taste and season with salt and pepper.
3. Divide the salad among serving plates and drizzle with dressing. Cut the lamb racks into quarters and divide among plates. Serve immediately.

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