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Ask Laura – The Green Kitchen Economist



By Laura Bruzas June 9 at 8:17 a.m.



Laura Bruzas

Dear Laura,

I'm of Polish descent and, like you, prefer homecooking to dining out. Might you have any easy-to-prepare recipes in your repertoire using local ingredients in season now reminiscent of my Mom's home cooking? Thomas P.

Thomas,

You don't have to be of Polish descent to enjoy the following recipe but since I am, it has become one of my favorite fast-n-easy recipes. Based on a ready-in-20-minutes-or-less recipe that I found in Real Simple magazine, my version has fewer calories and less fat, cholesterol, sodium and sugar.

Laura's Potato Pierogi with Sautéed Cabbage and Apples

- 1 16-oz package of frozen 365 Organic Potato & Onion Pierogi
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, cut into rings
- 1 crisp organic apple (such as Braeburn or Gala), cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1/2 small head organic green cabbage, shredded
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup organic sour cream

Cook the pierogi according to the package directions. While the pierogi is cooking, saute onion rings in oil until soft, 5-6 minutes. Add apple pieces to onion rings and cook for 1 minute. Finally, add the cabbage and vinegar. Cook until the cabbage is slightly wilted but still crunchy, 2 to 3 minutes. Divide the cabbage mixture among four plates. Serve with the pierogi and sour cream on the side. Serves 4.

Approximate per serving nutrition info for Laura's version: Calories 294; Fat 7g; Sat Fat 2g; Chol 15mg; Sodium 355mg; Protein 8.5g; Carbs 54g; Fiber 5g; Sugar 9g; Potassium 251mg

Per serving nutrition info of Real Simple version: Calories 332, Fat 10g Sat Fat 4g Chol 25mg Sodium 692mg Protein 8g Carbs 44g Fiber 5g Sugar 13g

What made the difference? I replaced the conventional potato and cheddar cheese pierogi called for with the WFM 365 brand organic potato and onion pierogi, increased the cabbage to a full 1/2 head and eliminated the added salt. To reduce the calorie and fat count further, use non-fat organic sour cream.

What's in Season in Illinois in Early June...Apples, Asparagus, Beans, Berries, Cabbage, Carrots, Cherries, Eggplant, Garlic, Horseradish, Leeks, Lettuce, Melons, Nectarines, Okra, Onions, Peaches, Peas, Plums, Potatoes, Radishes, Rhubarb, Spinach, Squash, Strawberries, Tomatoes, Turnips

Source: <http://www.agr.state.il.us/markets/WhatsInSeason.pdf>

Bruzas is the founder of Healthy Dining Chicago, an all-volunteer community effort which offers a steady diet of bite-sized, easy-to-digest morsels of practical information and valuable resources to help time-pressed, health-minded consumers make smart, informed choices that are kind to Mother Earth and all of her inhabitants via a weekly e-newsletter, corporate Lunch-n-Learn presentations and library programs. <http://www.HealthyDining.org>.