

Hoquiam Farmer's Market News - OPEN on Valentine's Day Edition

Local News

Posted by:

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Yes, Yes! We will be open on Valentine's Day! Just in case you were wondering, since Tuesday is usually a closed day for the Farmers Market. All of our lovely and seductive flowers and chocolates are awaiting you- as are the Artichokes. A quick note about gardening- this Spring like weather has us itching to be digging in the dirt- the Master Gardeners are having a workshop this Saturday, Feb. 18th, from 10am until noon at the Hoquiam Timberland Library. The subject is getting an early start on your garden, and keeping the vegetables coming all year round. A demonstration on putting together a Hoop House will be given. Hoop Houses are the answer to a gardeners prayers! Easy, cheap and incredibly effective! Call the library for further information; 532-1710

Having been happily married for a number of years, my expectations of Valentine's Day have evolved beyond the giddy romanticism of youth. But then, I never did fall for the commercial push of equating spending money as the way to win a lover's heart. I liked the innocent times of exchanging homemade Valentine's cards with every single classmate and then taping them to my bedroom wall. My friend Carl had it right when he commented that for me, every day with Joe is Valentine's Day. As long as he remembers to bring a card home, I'll be totally happy. When it comes to planning a special Valentine's dinner, I have just one word to say; Crab. Crab is my ultimate most favorite food, and the season is finally getting going. Both of us tackle the very simple preparation of backing and gutting the crab, then removing the legs and cracking them. Unless you're fortunate enough to have live crab, I highly recommend that you place the chilled cooked crab in the microwave at this point. Just two minutes, and the heat enhances the flavors tremendously. Then comes the personal decision about dipping sauce. We are purists and use melted butter, lots of it. Other people like mayonnaise or mayo mixed with seafood sauce- I think the delicate flavor is best left to butter. A good crusty bread and a nice bottle of Champagne, and the meal is off to a great start! Now, another delicacy to add to the meal of romance may come as a bit of a surprise; Artichokes. Uh-huh. First of all, the flavor blends beautifully with the crab, and second- the artichoke is the sexiest vegetable I know of! Artichokes are simple to cook- like any great love affair, they're best when hot and steamy. Here's how; cut the stem to about one inch, and slice 1 inch off the upper portion. Peel away a few layers of the lower leaves, then rinse well. In a large pot, put a couple inches of water, a clove of garlic, a slice of lemon, and a bay leaf (this adds wonderful flavor to the artichokes). Insert a steaming basket. Add the artichokes. Cover. Bring to a boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cook, covered, for 25 to 45 minutes or until the outer leaves can easily be pulled off. Now comes the fun part! The artichoke must be undressed, slowly, one prickly leaf at a time. Each leaf has a bit of tender flesh clinging to the edge, so gently tug it away with your teeth. The further you go, the more meat is exposed. Finally the leaves are all laying in a heap on the table, and the core of the artichoke is exposed. A silken layer of shimmery hairs provide the final barrier, but these can be easily tugged away. And there, at last, is the Heart of the Artichoke. And you know just what to do with that. Sheer Romance! The perfect dessert is also exceptionally easy, and needs to be made ahead. No last minute fussing involved. Mini Cheesecakes line a muffin tin with

12 paper or foil liners. Fill each cup with one Oreo Cookie Cream together; two 8 ounce packages of cream cheese (light is okay), softened one half cup of sugar one tsp Vanilla extract two eggs Pour into the cups, filling 3/4's full. Bake at 325 degrees for twenty five minutes. Chill, overnight is best. Then top with your favorite jam. I've used Nancy's Raspberry Chocolate Sauce, the very best ever! You can also use fruit (think blueberries, when in season) or double the decadence by using a piece of candy. There you have it- a meal fit for a King and Queen, and hardly any work involved! Your sweetie will be so impressed. The Hoquiam Farmers Market has lovely Organic Artichokes in right now, along with the very best Chocolate Truffles ever! Heart shaped sugar cookies, fresh blooming Jasmine, Hydrangeas, Azaleas, Narcissus, Tulips, mini Calla Lilly, and single long stem cut roses for the classic Valentine's token of love. Both the Market and Deidra's Deli will be open and ready to help you shower your beloved with affection. Barbara Bennett Parsons, manager of the Hoquiam Farmers Market and Deidra's Deli, crazy in love still! 1958 Riverside in Hoquiam. Deidra's delivers between 9am and 1:30pm, and stay open until 7pm weeknights. 538-5880 for Deidra, 538-9747, the market Yup, life is sweet.--

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