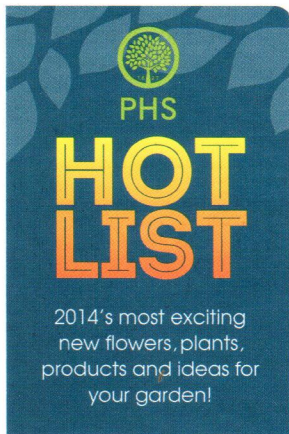


INCREDIBLE VEGETABLES

Cauliflower & Radish REVISITED

BY MARION MCPARLAND



Visit PHSonline.org for the 2014 PHS Hot List of plants, vegetables, and products for your home and garden.

"EAT YOUR VEGETABLES" is a phrase we all remember hearing as children. While some of us have fond memories of Aunt Kate's corn, many of us are haunted by visions of our dinner plate filled with a large serving of over-cooked spinach or a huge spoonful of runny squash. In fact, one bite of a bitter red radish may have turned you against them for life.

Luckily, things are different now. Fresh organic produce, grown in your own backyard or in a community garden, or purchased at a farmers market, is on everyone's menu these days. Two vegetables you may, or may not, have fond childhood memories of—cauliflower and radishes—are included in the PHS "hot list" of plants for 2014 as veggies to reacquaint yourself with this year.

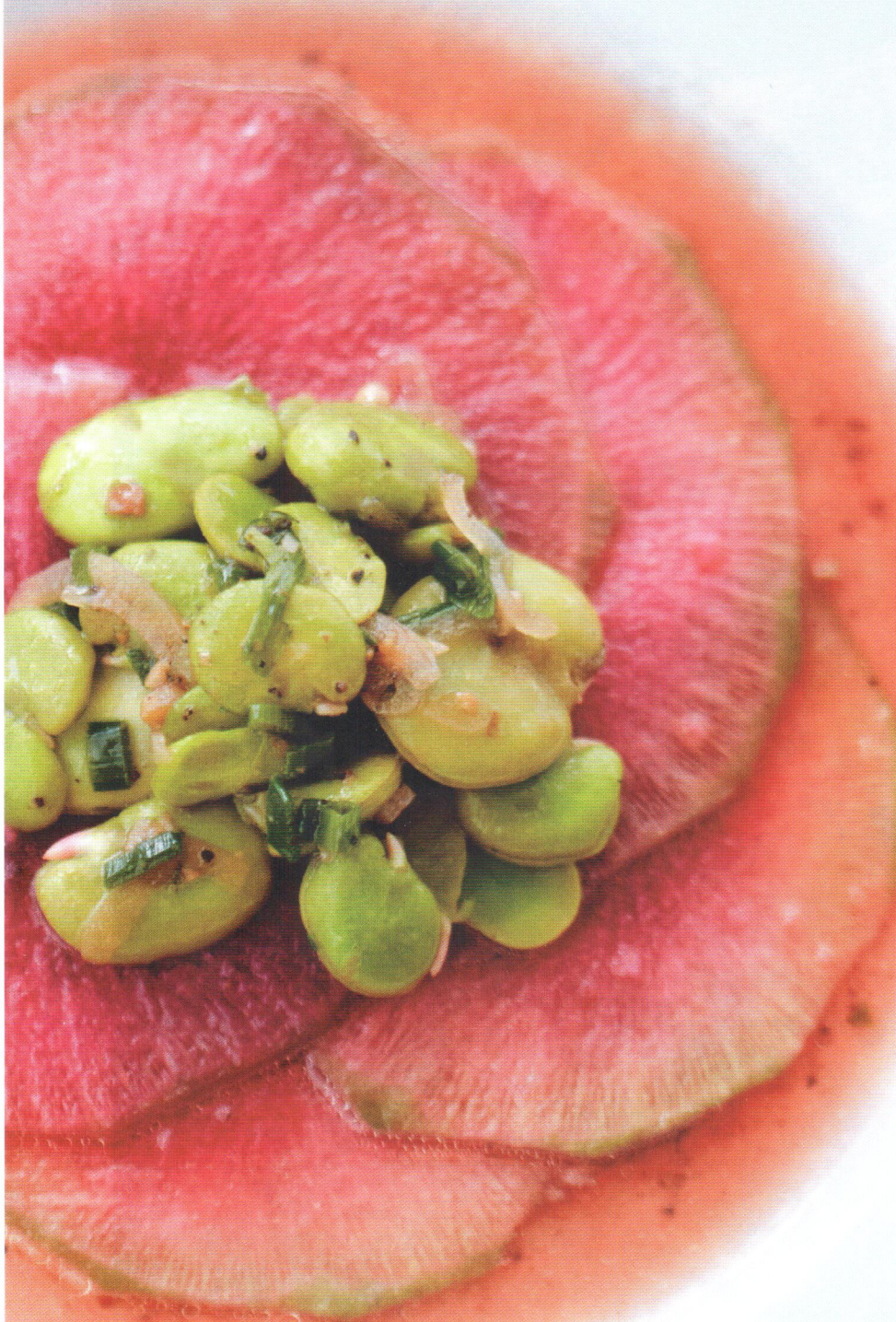
Praised for its versatility, cruciferous cauliflower can be enjoyed as a side or a main dish, replacing chicken or meat with its texture. Serve it in a salad, tossed with herbs, vinegars, and oils, or pulse it into grains, risotto, or rice in the food processor. Low in calories, high in antioxidants and vitamin C, cauliflower is in, and meat is out.

"Meat has become boring and predictable," says Rich Landau, chef/owner of one of Philadelphia's most acclaimed vegetarian restaurants, Vedge. "Vegetables are phenomenal, sexy, colorful, and change with the seasons!"





Enjoy watermelon radish carpaccio with fava beans and tarragon at Vedge, 1221 Locust Street in Philadelphia (vedgerestaurant.com).



Photos this page by Michael Spain-Smith

Rich Landau and
Kate Jacoby

"Cauliflower is so hot right now, you can do anything with it," says Landau. "Whether you serve it raw as crudité, boiled, roasted, steamed, or grilled, or sautéed with olive oil, it is fool-proof. I love it grilled on the barbecue—this is a perfect match for cauliflower," he says. He recommends blanching it first in boiling water for two minutes, coating with a marinade, and cutting carefully, leaving large pieces on the core to keep it together on the grill. Cauliflower also lends itself well to any ethnic cuisine, including a Mexican salsa verde, a Middle Eastern Za'atar spice, Creole, or Vietnamese chili lime sauce.

Another vegetable to revisit this year is the humble radish. According to *Mother Earth News*, the radish was esteemed by the Greek god Apollo, cultivated by Egyptian pyramid builders, and eaten for breakfast by American settlers. It was prescribed by physicians to prevent scurvy, used by herbalists to ward off women's chatter, and salted or pickled to accompany food and drink throughout recorded time. The radish is still so revered that there is a Night of the Radish—*La Noche de los Rabanos*—every December 23 in Oaxaca, Mexico. Local farmers grow giant white winter radishes, which are carved into sculptures worthy of a museum display.

One of Landau's personal favorites, radishes have been slower to catch on. "Not everyone loves radishes. I have loved them since I was a kid," he says. "They are so easy to grow yourself, and you can roast them whole, including the greens; they are so tasty."

With four types—spring, summer, winter, and Daikon (Asian radishes in winter) in an assortment of exotic varieties, shapes, and skin colors—there is a radish to please every

possible palate. From sweet to spicy to savory, the heirloom varieties are endless, including French Breakfast, Early Scarlet Globe, Cherry Belle, Philadelphia White Box, Pink Beauty, Crimson Giant, French Dressing, Sparkler, and Watermelon, among many others.

Landau encourages people to let go of their childhood hang-ups and experience a whole new world of vegetables. "Forget that hot, bitter red radish with a sting that lingered for a half an hour," he says. His advice: roast any kind of radish whole. Drizzle olive oil, and season with salt, pepper and garlic. Roast at 400 degrees until the skin crinkles and is tender to the touch. Cook the greens as well. "Make a meal out of it!"

On his restaurant's menu, Landau offers "Fancy Radishes," an assortment of heirloom varieties including Spanish black, shunyu, green meat, candela di fuoco, watermelon, icicle, and Daikon (depending on availability). Each one is prepared differently—marinated, grilled, roasted, and pickled, and served like an exotic sushi sample with smoked soy sauce and pickled tofu.

"Vegetables are like relationships," says Landau. "Cauliflower is easy to love, but radishes take some warming up to. You have to get to know radishes a little bit first."



Enjoy recipes from **VEDGE** at home with Rich Landau and Kate Jacoby's cookbook, **VEDGE: 100 Plates Large and Small That Redefine VEGETABLE COOKING.**

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