

the nourished kitchen

Farm-to-Table
recipes for the
Traditional Foods
Lifestyle

Jennifer McGruther

sampler menu *from the* cookbook

STARTER

sherried chicken liver pâté *with*
apples *and* sage

SALAD

roasted beet *and* walnut salad *with*
spiced kombucha vinaigrette

MAIN COURSE

pot roast *with* apples, sweet potatoes,
and prunes

FERMENT

fennel, kohlrabi, *and* green apple relish

SOMETHING SWEET

maple-roasted pears

SUPPORTING RECIPES

clarified butter

kombucha

beef bone broth



sherried chicken liver pâté

with apples and sage ✂

I prepare pâté every few weeks, cap it with clarified butter so that it will keep, and dip into it from time to time when I need a quick lunch or a light snack. I make this version in the fall, when apples from the market tumble through my kitchen door by the bushel, and before all the sage in my garden withers away for winter. The key to a light, perfectly smooth pâté is to puree it until thoroughly smooth, then press it through a fine-mesh sieve or a chinois to remove any grit or remaining sinew. I struggled for years with thick and pasty pâté before learning this technique. **SERVES 4 TO 6**

1 pound chicken livers,
trimmed of any sinew
Milk, to marinate the
chicken livers
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons
clarified butter (page 59)
1 shallot, finely minced
1 medium apple, cored,
peeled, and chopped
2 tablespoons chopped
fresh sage
½ cup dry sherry

Put the chicken livers in a large mixing bowl, cover them with milk, and let them marinate in the refrigerator for at least 4 and up to 12 hours. Drain the livers, discarding the milk, and pat them dry with a kitchen towel.

Melt the 2 tablespoons of clarified butter in a wide skillet over medium heat. Stir in the shallot and fry until translucent, soft, and fragrant, about 4 minutes. Stir in the apple and sage and cook until the apple is tender, about 8 minutes. Add the livers to the pan and cook until browned on the outside but still slightly pink in the center, about 8 minutes. Stir in the sherry and simmer for another 3 to 5 minutes, until most of the liquid evaporates. Turn off the heat and allow the mixture to cool for about 5 minutes.

Transfer the liver mixture to a food processor. Pulse 2 or 3 times, then process continuously, adding the remaining 1 cup of clarified butter about 1 tablespoon at a time through the feed tube.

Transfer the pâté to a fine-mesh sieve or a chinois set over a bowl. Press it through the screen to remove any tough bits. Spoon the pâté into ramekins, cover well, and transfer to the refrigerator for at least 4 hours and up to 5 days. Remove the pâté from the refrigerator 20 to 30 minutes before serving so it can come to room temperature and soften slightly.

roasted beet *and* walnut salad *with* spiced kombucha vinaigrette ✂

Kombucha, a fermented tea of Asian origin, offers a flavor reminiscent of apple cider vinegar: it's sour, but also mildly sweet. Its flavor pairs well with warm spices like cinnamon, cloves, and allspice, while its acidity is strong enough to stand up against the sweet and earthy flavors of root vegetables and nuts.

Beets number among the few vegetables that my family eats year-round, fresh in spring and autumn and stored in boxes of dirt during the cold part of the year. Lacking greens in the winter, we often eat beets as a salad, sprinkled with roasted walnuts and dressed with a spiced vinaigrette. **SERVES 4 TO 6**

SALAD

2 pounds beets

1 tablespoon clarified butter
(page 59)

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup chopped walnuts

1 small red onion, sliced into
rings no thicker than $\frac{1}{8}$ inch

VINAIGRETTE

2 tablespoons kombucha
(page 286)

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon finely ground
unrefined sea salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground allspice

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon ground cloves

2 tablespoons cold-pressed
walnut oil

2 tablespoons extra-virgin
olive oil

Preheat the oven to 425°F.

To prepare the salad, trim the beets by removing any beet tops and the tips of their roots. Dot each beet with a touch of clarified butter, then wrap each in parchment paper and again in aluminum foil. Roast the beets for 45 to 60 minutes, until they yield under the pressure of a fork. Refrigerate the beets for at least 8 and up to 24 hours.

To prepare the vinaigrette, whisk the kombucha tea with the salt, allspice, cloves, and the walnut and olive oils. The vinaigrette will store at room temperature for up to 3 weeks, but remember to shake it vigorously before dressing the salad because the oil will separate from the tea and spices when left sitting.

Just before serving, heat a skillet over medium-high heat for 2 to 3 minutes until very hot. Toss in the walnuts and toast them for 3 to 5 minutes, stirring frequently to avoid scorching.

Remove the cold beets from the fridge, peel them, and chop into bite-sized pieces. In a large bowl, toss the beets with the sliced onion and toasted walnuts. Drizzle with the vinaigrette, toss again, and serve.





pot roast *with* apples, sweet potatoes, and prunes 🍷

Apples, sweet potatoes, and prunes complement grass-fed beef's natural, if subtle, sweetness in this simple pot roast. My family relies on pot roasts frequently, particularly in the fall and winter, when one roast might feed us for several meals.

Nowadays, spices like allspice and cloves seem relegated to baked goods and desserts, though they have traditionally been used to season meats in addition to sweets. I like the way their sweet spiciness forms a bridge of flavors between the beef, apples, sweet potatoes, and prunes in this dish. If you can't find hard cider for this pot roast, substitute sweet apple cider. **SERVES 6 TO 8**

2 teaspoons finely ground
unrefined sea salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground
black pepper
½ teaspoon ground allspice
½ teaspoon ground coriander
¼ teaspoon ground cloves
1 rump roast (about 4 pounds)
3 tablespoons lard or tallow
1 yellow onion, quartered
3 apples, peeled, cored, and
quartered
3 large sweet potatoes,
peeled and chopped into
1-inch pieces
2 cups pitted prunes
4 cups Beef Bone Broth
(page 117)
2 cups hard apple cider

Preheat the oven to 275°F.

Measure the salt, pepper, allspice, coriander, and cloves into a small bowl, then whisk them together to form a spice rub. Rinse the meat and pat it dry. Rub the spices into all sides of the meat.

Melt the fat in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat, then place the seasoned meat in the hot fat, searing it for about 3 minutes on each side. Arrange the onion, apples, sweet potatoes, and prunes around the meat, then pour in the broth and hard cider. Turn off the heat, cover the pot, and transfer it to the oven. Leave the pot in the oven for 4 hours, or until the meat becomes tender and the vegetables soften.

Spoon the vegetables into bowls, slice the meat, and layer it over the vegetables. Ladle on a bit of sauce over the roast and serve.

fennel, kohlrabi, *and* green apple relish 🍷

In August, apples make their first appearance in the mountains. It's about this time that the year's first kohlrabi are ready for picking, while the last of the summer's fennel still lingers in the field. I like all three together, fermented into a sauerkraut-like relish with a subtle hint of apple and a potent licorice-like kick of fennel. I typically use tiny green apples—about the size of a golf ball—from the mystery tree in my farmer's front yard, but any green apple will do nicely. **MAKES ABOUT 1 QUART**

6 kohlrabi
6 fennel bulbs with fronds
2 small green apples
(about 8 ounces), cored
and finely chopped
3½ teaspoons finely ground
unrefined sea salt

Trim the kohlrabi of their leaves and stems, then peel them. Slice them thinly into matchsticks about 2 inches long by ⅛ inch thick. Place them in a large mixing bowl.

Remove and discard the long stalks of the fennel bulbs, but reserve about ½ cup of loosely packed fronds. Chop the fronds finely, and then slice the fennel bulbs no thicker than ⅛ inch. Add the sliced bulbs and chopped fronds to the bowl with the kohlrabi.

Toss the apples and salt into the bowl and knead the ingredients with your hands until they release their juice. Layer the mixture into a quart-sized fermentation crock, 1 cup at a time. Pack it tightly into the crock so that any air escapes and the ingredients release more of their juice. Continue packing and layering until you've added the entire contents of the mixing bowl to the crock. Pack down the ingredients once more to ensure that they are completely submerged in the brine and that the brine rests below the lip of the crock by at least 1 inch.

Close the crock and ferment at room temperature for 10 to 14 days before tasting. If you prefer a stronger or sourer flavor, continue fermenting until done to your liking, testing every 3 to 5 days. Transfer to the refrigerator, root cellar, or other place of cold storage once the relish achieves the level of sourness you prefer and use within 6 months.



maple-roasted pears 🍷

Maple and pears make a natural match. Roasting the pears in a buttery syrup spiked with nutmeg and cinnamon results in a humble and not overly assertive treat. While these pears make an obvious dessert, they are also excellent served with breakfast or brunch. **SERVES 4**

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons Grade B maple syrup
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon finely ground unrefined sea salt
- 4 medium pears, peeled, halved, and cored

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Melt the butter in an ovenproof skillet over medium heat. When it froths, whisk in the maple syrup, nutmeg, cinnamon, and salt. Remove from the heat and place the pears cut side down in the pan. Spoon a bit of the sauce over the pears and bake for 45 minutes, until tender when pierced with a fork.

Serve warm, drizzled with the pan juices.



clarified butter 🍷

Clarifying butter deepens its flavor and color and concentrates its butterfat by removing its milk solids. The process also helps to extend its shelf life. Store clarified butter at room temperature out of direct light, just as you would store olive oil, coconut oil, or any other concentrated fat. Once you’ve removed the milk solids from the butterfat, there’s little risk of spoilage.

You can apply high heat to clarified butter in ways that would cause regular butter to scorch. **MAKES ABOUT 12 OUNCES**

- 1 pound unsalted butter, cut into 1-inch pieces

Place the butter in a wide sauté pan set over low heat. Allow the butter to melt slowly. As it heats, froth and foam will gather on top of the liquid butter. Skim this off and discard it. Continue heating the butter until it becomes perfectly clear, about 10 minutes.

Set a fine-mesh sieve over a bowl and line it with a double layer of cheesecloth or a single layer of butter muslin. Pour the melted butter through the cloth and into the bowl. Discard the milk solids in the cloth, then pour the clarified butter into three 4-ounce jars or one 12-ounce jar and cover tightly. Stored in a cool, dark space, the clarified butter will keep for up to 1 year.



kombucha ୧୫

At once both sour and sweet, with a delightful fizz, kombucha is an enigmatic tonic. It relies upon the action of a complex matrix of bacteria and yeasts that exist together in one gelatinous, somewhat stringy disc. Most accurately, the disc is described as a SCOBY—a symbiotic colony of bacteria and yeasts. However, fermentation lovers and kombucha brewers also refer to it as a mushroom, which it most decidedly is not, or a "mother." I prefer the term "mother," which is less clinical but still fitting, as the kombucha starter will produce miniature versions of itself over time. These kombucha "babies" can then be passed onto friends or neighbors so that they, too, can begin preparing the medicinal tonic.

Kombucha relies on the fermentation of strong, sweet tea. While most brewers favor black tea and white sugar, all varieties of the *Camellia sinensis* plant work well, including green tea, white tea, and oolong tea. Herbal teas, by contrast, do not support the health of the kombucha mother over the long term. **MAKES ABOUT 1 QUART**

4 cups water, preferably filtered

2 tablespoons loose-leaf Darjeeling or other tea (not herbal tea)

¼ cup white granulated sugar

¼ cup kombucha tea with live active cultures, brewed from a previous batch or purchased

1 kombucha mother

Bring the water to a boil if using black tea, to 180°F for oolong, to 175°F for green tea, or to 165°F for white tea. Drop the tea and sugar into a pitcher. Pour the hot water over the tea leaves and sugar, stirring until the sugar dissolves; let steep for 3 minutes if using black tea, 2 minutes for green tea, or 1 minute for white tea. Pour the sweetened tea through a fine-mesh sieve and into a large mason jar or glass canister and discard the spent tea leaves.

Allow the tea to cool to room temperature, 68° to 72°F. Stir in the brewed kombucha tea and drop the kombucha mother into the jar. Cover the jar loosely with a piece of cheesecloth and secure it to the jar with a length of kitchen twine. Allow the tea to ferment for 7 days at room temperature. Kombucha completes its brewing cycle when a new layer develops above and separates from the kombucha mother. Taste the kombucha, and if you prefer a sourer brew, continue fermenting, tasting every few days, until it achieves the flavor you like.

Once the kombucha acquires the flavor and strength that suits you, gently lift the mother from the jar and set it in a bowl with ¼ cup of the finished tea. Pour the remaining finished kombucha tea into jars or bottles. You can enjoy the kombucha right away. After this initial fermentation, the kombucha will be flat. To develop a fizzy or flavored kombucha, follow the instructions on page 288.

Now that your first batch of kombucha is finished, you can prepare a second batch using the reserved mother and the reserved kombucha tea. If you're not ready to prepare another batch of kombucha quite yet, place the reserved kombucha mother into a clean quart-size glass jar, add brewed kombucha tea to cover, and place a lid loosely on top. The mother will store for 30 days or longer at room temperature, and you can remove it from the jar at any time to brew another batch of kombucha tea.



beef bone broth

The trick to making a good beef bone broth is to roast the bones before simmering them in a pot of water, herbs, and vegetables. Roasting helps to release a significant amount of fat from the bones, which can otherwise leave a greasy film in the broth or infuse it with an odd, flat, and almost acrid flavor. With much of the fat released and a rounder, more complex flavor developed during roasting, the resulting broth has the flavorful complexity of roast beef.

I find that beef bone broth makes an excellent base for hearty soups, stews, and braised meats. When preparing roasted root vegetable soups, I invariably choose this broth because it, unlike milder chicken broth, has the fortitude to complement assertive flavors.

While you can use any beef bones to produce a delicious broth, choosing a variety of beef bones including neck bones, knuckle bones, and a small number of marrow bones will produce the richest broth. **MAKES ABOUT 4 QUARTS**

5 pounds beef soup bones
2 bay leaves
4 sprigs thyme
3 tablespoons whole black peppercorns
2 large yellow onions, quartered
3 carrots, chopped
2 celeriac, peeled and chopped
4 cloves garlic, smashed
1 cup red wine
2 gallons water, plus more as needed

Preheat the oven to 425°F.

Arrange the bones in a roasting pan in a single layer and roast for 45 minutes. Transfer the bones to a heavy stockpot. Toss in the bay leaves, thyme, peppercorns, onions, carrots, celeriac, and garlic. Pour in the red wine and water.

Bring the liquid to a boil over high heat, then immediately lower the heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer for at least 12 and up to 18 hours, adding water as necessary to keep the bones submerged.

Strain the broth through a fine-mesh sieve, discard the solids, and pour the broth into jars. Cover the jars and place them in the fridge; you can remove the fat that hardens on the surface and use it for cooking. Use up the broth within a week, or freeze it for up to 6 months.



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Published in the United States by Ten Speed Press, an imprint
of the Crown Publishing Group, a division of Random House LLC,
a Penguin Random House Company, New York.

www.crownpublishing.com

www.tenspeed.com

Ten Speed Press and the Ten Speed Press colophon are registered
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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is on file
with the publisher.

Trade Paperback ISBN: 978-1-60774-468-9

eBook ISBN: 978-1-60774-469-6

Printed in China

Design by Chloe Rawlins

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

First Edition

