

## Add some zest to dinner

By Alison Highberger / *For The Bulletin*

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Citrus is a diplomatic family of fruits that gets along beautifully with both sweet and savory flavors.

Think key lime pie or lemon basil chicken. Lemon icebox cake or spicy orange beef. Citrus is comfortable being sweet, tart or in between.

Today we're focusing on citrus's savory side, exploring how it can add what chefs and culinary experts call "brightness" to savory dishes — foods that are pungently flavorful without sweetness.

Chef Tim Garling of Bend's Jackalope Grill loves the way citrus perks up his savory menu offerings.

"Whenever I make anything, I add acidity. Acidity perks up the taste buds. I call it brightness. I'll add lemon or lime juice or vinegar — white balsamic vinegar is very citrusy — to add that acidity," Garling said.

His Orange-Ginger Braised Short Ribs (see recipe, Page F2) include orange juice concentrate and orange zest, the fragrant, colorful outer skin of a citrus fruit.

Garling likes to use a microplane grater to get the zest off oranges or any citrus. Unlike traditional graters, microplanes shave very thin slivers from food with their multiple razor-sharp, tiny blades.

"With a metal box grater, it just sticks to the inside. There's nothing like a microplane. I absolutely believe in them, and don't see how you can cook without one.

"It's so sharp that you're not going to get that pithy white part that's bitter. The microplane pulverizes the zest into a dust, so it'll sort of disappear into the dish," Garling said.

Sometimes Garling likes to cook with big slabs of zest, and for that he uses a vegetable peeler.



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Chef Tim Garling's short ribs at the Jackalope Grill get a citrus boost from orange juice concentrate and orange zest.



He said he sometimes leaves the larger strips of zest in his cooked dishes, or he'll display them on the plate.

"I hate to have people bite into a big chunk. I leave it in large pieces so it's up to them if they want to eat it," he said.

Molly Stevens loves the flavor of cooked citrus zest. She's a contributing editor of *Fine Cooking Magazine* and developed the recipe for Orange-Roasted Salmon with Yogurt-Caper Sauce (see Page F2).

"We eat preserved lemons. I often roast lemons along with fish, meat — veal, pork — and love to eat that tenderized bit of citrus," she said in a phone interview from New York City.

Stevens said the thing that's important to know about citrus flavoring, especially in savory foods, is there are two layers of flavors happening.

"You have the flavor of the juice, which is very fresh, water-based, almost ethereal, like a fresh squeeze of juice at the end of cooking. You also have the zest — an oil-based flavor that's got legs; it lasts longer. You can put it in at the beginning, so it permeates the dish. I often use both: a little zest at the beginning and juice at the end," Stevens said.

She, too, is a big fan of the microplane, and said she loves the rasp style. Stevens recommends zesting citrus fruit right over the food that's being mixed. Don't zest it onto a plate and then transfer it to the recipe.

"If you shined a light while you're zesting, you'd see little particles of oil, so zest it right over the bowl so all those little drops of oil and flavor go right into the dish," Stevens suggested.

Her salmon recipe calls for a sprinkle of fine orange zest and other seasonings on the fish before 10 to 15 minutes of baking, and her rule of thumb is, "the longer the cooking the bigger the piece of zest."

"If you're doing a long braise, you wouldn't put in fine zest, it would disperse. I'd take a vegetable peeler and peel off two-and-a-half-inch by three-quarter-inch-wide pieces of zest and add those at the beginning of a long-cooked stew or braise. That way, the zest will slowly release the flavor over a long cooking time,"



Photos by Rob Kerr / The Bulletin

Chef Tim Garling at Bend's Jackalope Grill likes to add citrus to his savory dishes to perk up eaters' taste buds. To harvest just the flavorful outer skin, he uses either a vegetable peeler for big strips or a microplane (above) for a fine consistency.



she said.

Since citrus zest is a stronger flavor than citrus juice, Garling said he avoids overdoing the zest.

“If I'm using three oranges, I'll zest one and a half of them. If I'm using the juice of one lemon, I'll zest that one,” he said.

The next time you see fresh lemons, limes and oranges, think about their affinity for savory cooking, or stop by the Jackalope Grill for Orange-Ginger Braised Short Ribs if you're not in the mood to cook.

“It's a lot easier, and we'll even wash the dishes,” said Garling.

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## Citrus sources

The large family of citrus fruits, notable for tartness and vitamin C, includes: citron, grapefruit, kumquat, lavender gem, lemon, lime, orange, mandarin orange, oro blanco, pomelo, shaddock, tangelo, tangerine and ugli fruit.

Store citrus fruits in the humidified drawer of the fridge, according to University of California, Davis researchers.

Oranges should last from three to eight weeks.

— From “The New Food Lover's Companion” by Sharon Tyler Herbst and Ron Herbst and UC Davis Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources

## Citrus, Fennel, and Rosemary Olives

A mix of fruity and meaty olives works well in this recipe. They are ideal for cocktail platters, antipasto, snacking or as a gift when placed in a decorative jar.

22 oz (about 4 C) assorted olives (such as nicoise, arbequina, kalamata and picholine)

2 C extra-virgin olive oil

1 C finely chopped fennel bulb

1 TBS chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

1½ tsp chopped fresh rosemary

1 tsp grated lemon zest

¾ tsp crushed red pepper flakes

3 garlic cloves, minced

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl; stir well to combine. Cover and refrigerate 48 hours. Serve at room temperature.

**Note:** Refrigerate for up to 1 month.

— From Cooking Light Magazine, November 2009

## Jackalope Grill's Orange-Ginger Braised Short Ribs

Makes 6-8 servings.

2-3 TBS canola or grapeseed oil

5 lbs boneless beef short ribs, cut into 8- or 9-oz pieces

All-purpose flour for dredging

2 TBS fresh grated ginger

1 TBS diced fresh garlic

2 tsp red pepper flakes

1½ C orange juice concentrate

1½ C water

Zest from 1 lg orange

2/3 C hoisin sauce

¼ C tomato paste

¼ C honey

2 TBS soy sauce

Salt

Freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

Heat the vegetable oil over medium-high heat in a heavy, ovenproof frying pan, about 12 to 14 inches in diameter, with a lid. Salt and pepper the ribs, and rub the seasoning into the meat. Then dredge the ribs in the flour, shaking off any excess, and add the ribs to the hot pan, being careful not to crowd the pan. You can brown the ribs in batches. Brown the ribs on all sides, about 2 minutes per side. Remove the ribs from the pan and set aside.

Pour out any excess oil from the pan, and then add the ginger, garlic and red pepper flakes to the pan, and cook about 1 minute or until fragrant. Add the orange juice concentrate, water, zest, hoisin sauce, tomato paste, honey and soy sauce to the pan, stir to combine and scrape the bottom of the pan to loosen any browned bits.

Return the beef to the pan, cover, and place the pan in the preheated oven. Bake for 2 to 3 hours, turning the pieces over every half hour. To make a delicious crust on the ribs, remove the pot lid and baste the ribs every 15 minutes. If the sauce is getting too thick, add a little more water. The ribs are done when the beef is tender and the sauce is thick.

**Chef Tim Garling's notes:** I like to serve this dish with coconut jasmine rice. Boneless short ribs can be hard to find, but worth the search. These are best made a day in advance. Remove the ribs from the pan, and refrigerate the ribs and sauce overnight. The excess fat rendered during cooking is then easily removed. The next day, rewarm the sauce and ribs over low heat, being careful not to burn them.

— From Chef Tim Garling, Jackalope Grill, 1245 S.E. Third St., Bend; 541-318-8435, [www.jackalopegrill.com](http://www.jackalopegrill.com) (adapted from a recipe by Anne-Marie Ramo)

## Orange-Roasted Salmon with

## Yogurt-Caper Sauce

Makes 6 servings.

Because it's such a delicious roast, you'll be tempted to save this dish for company, but don't. Ready in the time it takes to make a salad and set the table, it's perfect for a weeknight meal, and the citrusy-tangy sauce is one you'll want to whip up anytime you want to add something special to a simple fish.

2 TBS extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for the baking sheet

6 1-inch-thick, skin-on, center-cut salmon fillets (about 6 oz each), pin bones removed

1½ tsp finely grated orange zest

¾ tsp kosher salt, plus more to taste

Freshly ground black pepper

¼ C plain whole-milk yogurt

2 TBS finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

1½ TBS capers, drained, rinsed, and chopped

1 TBS fresh orange juice

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 400 degrees. Lightly oil a heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet.

Arrange the salmon skin-side down on the baking sheet, drizzle with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil, and sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of the orange zest, the salt, and a few grinds of black pepper. Gently rub the seasonings into the fish. Let sit at room temperature while the oven heats.

Combine the yogurt in a small bowl with the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil, ½ teaspoon orange zest, and the parsley, capers and orange juice. Stir to combine. Season to taste with salt and black pepper. The sauce can be made up to several hours ahead and kept refrigerated.

Roast the salmon until just cooked through, with a trace of bright pink in the center (cut into a piece to check), 10 to 15 minutes. Serve immediately, drizzled with the yogurt sauce.

— From Molly Stevens, courtesy of Fine Cooking Magazine ([www.finecooking.com](http://www.finecooking.com))

## Celery Citrus Salad with Balsamic Vinegar and Feta

Makes 4 servings.

5 honey tangerines, Murcotts or Satsumas

1 oz (about ¼ C) feta cheese crumbles

2 TBS balsamic vinegar

4 C (about ¼ lb) mixed salad greens

3 C sliced celery

1 C roughly chopped celery leaves

Squeeze juice from one tangerine into a large bowl. Add feta cheese and vinegar and mix with a fork, mashing some of the cheese to make a dressing. Peel the remaining citrus and separate into segments. Transfer to

the bowl with the dressing. Add the salad greens, celery and celery leaves. Toss well and serve immediately.

— From [www.wholefoodsmarket.com](http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com)

## Citrus Salt

Makes 2 cups or enough for 4 (½ C) gifts.

Lemon, lime and orange zest add bright, fresh flavor to gourmet sea salt. A great addition to any seafood dish, from grilled fish to shrimp stir-fry, and perfect for the rim of margarita glasses, too.

2 C sea salt, grey salt or fleur de sel

2 TBS fresh lemon zest

1 TBS fresh lime zest

1 TBS fresh orange zest

Preheat oven to 225 degrees. Mix salt with zest and spread evenly on a baking sheet. Place in oven and bake 2 hours, until zest is dry. Place in a food processor or blender and pulse until evenly mixed. Divide evenly and package in decorative containers for gift giving.

— From [www.wholefoodsmarket.com](http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com)

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