

November 2022

## THE PERFECT SLICE – A KNIFE OR A MANDOLINE?

**Baked Sweetpotato Slices**

**Carrot Salad with Orange Mayonnaise**

**Cucumber, Radish, Celery, and Broccoli Salad  
with Honey–Mustard Dressing**

**Canadian Celery Vinegar**

**Cucumber Rolls and Roasted Red Pepper  
with *Feta* Cheese**

**Italian Vegetable *Capacchio***

**Melon Salad with Lime**

Get out your sharpest knife; this month we are going to prove it is all in the cut. Take a carrot, for example, and tell me that a long diagonally-cut carrot slice is not more appealing than a simple “coin.” I’m sure you have a paring knife (or a utility knife) which you favor, one you’ve sharpen over and over, one that fits perfectly in your hand and is nothing less than an extension of wrist, hand, and fingers. I have found one, made by a German firm, that inexplicably stays sharp, is easy to control, and never balks at the task. Cutting diagonal slices from the frozen stems of broccoli crowns or slicing frozen fruits is like slicing butter to this knife. Many knives have passed through my kitchens over the years; I have a couple of knives from “way back when,” bought in a “five and dime” while I was in graduate school, that still do a job when called upon.

However, the following projects that can be a whole lot easier and a whole lot safer if you have a culinary appliance known as a mandoline. No, not a mandolin although the name for this useful culinary tool is said to evolved from the musical instrument. A mandoline slices vegetables and firm fruits, like bananas, kiwifruit, large strawberries, and apples evenly. You can achieve very thin slices safely to use for the recipes I have included this month. These recipes will give you a chance to experiment with the thin slicing capability of your mandoline. Thinly sliced potatoes and sweetpotatoes, to fry for wonderful homemade chips, are a simple task. Because the mandoline, once set, will slice everything evenly, I use it to slice vegetables for grilling. Uneven slices are maddening if you try to grill them; those burned bits aren’t what you intend when you grill or bake. The mandoline creates diagonal slices beautifully, case in point the carrot mentioned above or try celery. Cauliflower “steaks” are much more easily cut with a mandoline. I use mine whenever I want to prepare onions for batter-fried onion rings, cucumber for wilted cucumber salads, citrus fruits, slices of *jicama*, beets, and slices from the neck of a butternut squash. Long thin slices of cucumber or zucchini or eggplant which can be rolled and stuffed for *rollatini* are a way easier job for this tool than for me with a knife. And once you have used your mandoline to prepare potatoes for scalloped potatoes [*see recipe archives – March 2017*], you’ll never go back to knife slicing.

## BAKED SWEETPOTATO SLICES

TPT - 56 minutes

*The southern-grown moist variety of sweetpotato, misnamed yams in the 1930s by a Louisiana ad agency, is a better choice for this recipe than are the dry, pale-skinned variety. True yams are a starchy tuber of Old World, not New World, origin which is scaly, hairy, and not at all sweet. True yams are more popular in Europe, Asia, and Africa. World agricultural statistics reveal that the sweet, dark orange tubers which we call yams are favored by North Americans and Australians, but by few others. To further complicate matters, many people just think of sweetpotatoes as “orange potatoes” but they are members of the Morning Glory family while potatoes are members of the Nightshade family. The method of preparation presented here, from the American South, shows off this, often neglected, vegetable in a very different way.*

*The sweetness of oven-roasted sweetpotatoes can be enhanced by starting the baking process in a cold oven and by allowing the oven temperature not to exceed 250 degrees F. This eliminates the starchy result of high-heat baking. Above 175 degrees F. the conversion of starch to sugar ceases. It is only logical to allow baked sweetpotatoes, roasted sweetpotatoes, or these baked slices to go through that sugar conversion period more slowly.*

*Using a mandoline creates even, consistent slices and makes an awkward task quite easy and, most of all, safe.*

**1 medium sweetpotato or yam—preferably round**

**2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil**

**1/4 teaspoon ground cumin, or more to taste**

**Salt, to taste**

**Freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

**2 teaspoons grated pecorino Romano or parmesan cheese, as preferred**

**Sprinkling organic fennel pollen\***

Prepare a cookie sheet, preferably one of the insulated variety, by lining it with aluminum foil and then coating the foil surface with non-stick lecithin spray coating.

Cut pointed ends from sweetpotato. Peel. Using a **mandoline**, set to create 1/4-inch slices, *carefully* slice the sweetpotato lengthwise into 6 1/4-inch slices.\*\* Turn into a large mixing bowl. Set aside briefly.

In a small dish, combine olive oil, ground cumin, salt, and pepper. Stir to mix well. Pour over sweetpotato slices. Toss gently to distribute evenly. Arrange slices on foil-lined baking sheet. Place in cold oven. Set oven temperature to 250 degrees F. and allow sweetpotatoes to bake for 40 minutes. Remove from oven.

Sprinkle grated cheese over each slice. Return to the oven for 4 minutes more, *being careful not to allow cheese to brown*. Using a spatula, transfer to two heated dinner plates.

Sprinkle with fennel pollen.

*Serve at once.*



Yields 6 slices  
adequate for 2 people

Notes: \*Organic fennel pollen is available from online spice suppliers.

\*\*If you do not have a mandoline, the sweetpotato can be sliced using a sharp knife. A mandoline makes an awkward task quite easy and, most of all, safe.

This recipe may be doubled, when required.

1/2 SERVING (i. e., per slice) –  
PROTEIN = 0.4 g.; FAT = 1.3 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 3.9 g.;  
CALORIES = 30; CALORIES FROM FAT = 39%

## CARROT SALAD WITH ORANGE MAYONNAISE

TPT - 43 minutes  
30 minutes = refrigeration period

*Easily prepared and quickly assembled, this is an attractive and delicious way to add a yellow vegetable to a menu and a good way to use up those awkward, large carrots one often finds in organic carrot bags. Usually, when I make this salad, I make a batch of homemade mayonnaise. It turns a simple salad into something just a bit more special.*

**3 large, thick carrots—peeled**  
**2 cups boiling water**

**1/4 cup calorie-reduced or light mayonnaise**  
**1 tablespoon finely chopped or puréed orange pulp**

**Freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

Using a **mandoline**, slice carrots into large, thin, elongated slices.\*

Cook carrot slices in *boiling* water for 4 minutes. Drain. Turn into a small bowl. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

In a serving dish, combine mayonnaise and orange pulp. Combine thoroughly. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Divide the cooked and chilled carrot slices amount four salad plates, piling them haphazardly but attractively in the center. Spoon a dollop of the prepared orange mayonnaise next to the carrots. Grind black pepper over.

*Serve chilled.* Have extra dressing available.

Yields 4 individual servings

Notes: \*After peeling the carrots, cut the stem end off each at the angle you want, i. e., to get the elongated slice for the salad, and then let the mandoline take over using your cut as its guide.

This recipe can be halved or doubled, when required.



1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 0.4 g.; FAT = 5.1 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 5.2 g.;  
CALORIES = 71; CALORIES FROM FAT = 64%

## CUCUMBER, RADISH, CELERY, AND BROCCOLI SALAD WITH HONEY–MUSTARD DRESSING

TPT - 7 minutes (if vegetables are prepped in advance)

*This too is an easily assembled dish whether you resort to a zen session with your favorite knife or whether you use the mandoline. During the winter months of the Covid-19 pandemic when the supply chain was stressed, I looked for ways to use certain organic vegetables that were almost always available in ways that seemed special or exciting. This was one of those recipes that seemed different, activated the salad plates, and got praise for its taste.*

- 1 mini organic cucumber—unpeeled, well-rinsed, and very thinly sliced**
- 3 large red organic radishes—trimmed, well-scrubbed, and very thinly sliced**
- 1 rib organic celery—trimmed, well-scrubbed, and very thinly sliced on the diagonal**
- 1/4 cup very thin slices organic broccoli stems—well-rinsed**
- 1 organic scallion—trimmed, well-rinsed, and very thinly sliced**
- 1 tablespoon chopped celery leaves**

### HONEY–MUSTARD DRESSING WITH CELERY VINEGAR:

- 1 1/2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil**
- 1 teaspoon Canadian celery vinegar**  
*[see recipe which follows] or white wine vinegar, if preferred*
- 1/4 teaspoon clover honey**
- 1/4 teaspoon Dijon mustard with wine**
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

- Grated organic lemon zest, to taste, for garnish**
- 1 teaspoon grated pecorino Romano cheese, for garnish**



In a mixing bowl, combine cucumber, radish, celery, broccoli, and scallion slices. Toss. Set aside briefly.

In a cruet, combine oil, vinegar, honey, mustard, and black pepper. Shake vigorously to combine ingredients well. Pour over vegetables in mixing bowl. Toss to coat vegetables well. Turn into a salad bowl or onto a platter.

Grate lemon zest over. Sprinkle grated *Romano* cheese over. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Yields 4 servings

Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 0.8 g.; FAT = 1.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 3.0 g.;  
CALORIES = 27; CALORIES FROM FAT = 53%

## CANADIAN CELERY VINEGAR

TPT - 4 weeks and 14 minutes;  
4 weeks = flavor development period

*I discovered this in a very old Canadian cookbook, which was a revision of an even earlier cookbook. Although it had to be changed quite a bit, it is, to us, a very pleasant and fresh-tasting taste during the late winter when the vinegars prepared from our summer herbs have been exhausted. And, it couldn't be easier to prepare . . .*

**1 quart distilled white vinegar**

**1/2 head (about 8 ounces) celery with leaves**

**2 tablespoons celery *or* lovage seed**

Sterilize **two one-quart canning jars**, lids, and rings.

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, heat vinegar to the boiling point.

Remove any outside celery stalks that are less-than-perfect and trim root end. Chop into very small pieces. Divide chopped celery between the two sterilized canning jars. Pour about 1 tablespoonful of celery seed into each jar.

Pour vinegar over celery. Using a chopstick, stir leaves for about 30 seconds to start the infusion. *Cool to room temperature.* Seal the jar and place in a cool, dark place for 1 month.

Sterilize a clear, condiment bottle, or several if you are planning to give the vinegar as gifts.

Place a fine sieve over a one-quart measuring cup or mixing bowl. Strain the vinegar, discarding the celery and celery seed recovered.

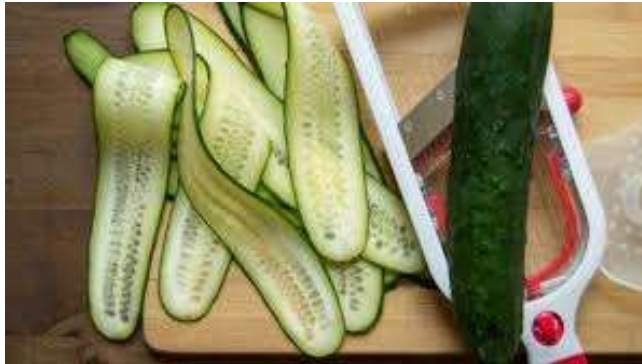
Pour vinegar into sterilized condiment bottle or bottles. Cap and label.

Store at cool room temperature.

Yields about 4 cupfuls

Note: This may be halved, when required.

1/48 SERVING (i. e., per tablespoonful) –  
PROTEIN = 0.0 g.; FAT = 0.0 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 0.7 g.;  
CALORIES = 1; CALORIES FROM FAT = 0%



## **CUCUMBER ROLLS AND ROASTED RED PEPPER WITH *FETA* CHEESE**

TPT – 14 minutes

*Another simple, quickly assembled, fresh salad, this salad is made even easier if you have a mandoline.*

*Be sure you choose a very firm cucumber.*

**1 firm cucumber—peeled**

**2 large roasted red pepper pieces**

**2 tablespoons crumbled feta cheese**

**Freshly ground mixed peppercorns—red, white,  
and black—to taste**

Slice the cucumber the long way, using a **mandoline**, to create 4-6 long uniform slices. Roll each cucumber slice and secure it with a plastic or wooden appetizer pick. Arrange on two salad plates.

Tuck a slice of roasted red pepper between the rolled cucumber slices.

Scatter a tablespoonful of *feta* cheese over the vegetables on each plate. Grind mixed peppercorns over. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

*Serve chilled.*

Yields 2 individual servings

Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 3.0 g.; FAT = 3.2 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 5.5 g.;  
CALORIES = 60; CALORIES FROM FAT = 48%

## ITALIAN VEGETABLE *CARPACCIO*

### *Carpaccio*

TPT - 1 hour and 8 minutes, after vegetables have been sliced;  
1 hour = flavor development period

*Ultra-thin slices of beef or veal or slices of tuna or salmon are frequently an appetizer selection on menus in Italy. Drizzled with the finest, most fragrant olive oil and freshly squeezed lemon juice and, then, garnished with slivered onions and marinated capers, carpaccio is a beautiful way to start a meal . . . unless you are a vegetarian. This is a vegetable appetizer that harkens to the classic. It is another chance to use your mandoline.*

**Thin, thin vegetable slices – choose firm**

**cucumbers**

**radishes**

**red onions**

**sweet onion**

**peppers**

**carrots**

**tomatoes**

**mushrooms**

**zucchini**

**yellow summer squash**

**kohlrabi**

***jicama***

***chayote***

**or celeriac**

**or maybe an avocado**

**cauliflower stems**

**broccoli stems**

**shallots**

**or, if you prefer, slivered onions  
and marinated capers**





**LEMON VINAIGRETTE:**

- 1 tablespoon liquid drained from jarred sun-dried tomato slices**
- 1 tablespoon *extra virgin* olive oil**
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice**
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed *dried* oregano**
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest**
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

Arrange enough of the large, thin vegetable slices to accommodate those dining attractively on a serving plate or platter, or, if preferred, arrange on individual salad plates.

Arrange *thinly* sliced cauliflower stems, broccoli stems, or shallots on top as a garnish. Add slivered onions and/or marinated capers, if desired.

In a cruet or jar, combine canning liquid from sun-dried tomatoes, olive oil, lemon juice, crushed, dried oregano, grated lemon zest, and black pepper. Shake well. Drizzle about 1 tablespoonful of the prepared lemon *vinaigrette* over the vegetable slices. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour to allow for flavor development.

Accompanied by the remainder of the *vinaigrette*, serve as an appetizer or as a different and really interesting salad.

1/4 SERVING LEMON VINAIGRETTE SUFFICIENT FOR 1 SERVING –  
PROTEIN = 0.0 g.; FAT = 5.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 0.3 g.;  
CALORIES = 52; CALORIES FROM FAT = 97%

plus VEGETABLES CHOSEN

**MELON SALAD WITH LIME**

TPT - 16 minutes

*When I am standing in my market sniffing melon after melon, I inevitably get asked, “How can you tell it will be a good one?” or “How do you know it is ripe?” All I can say is, “It should smell like you want it to taste.” I suspect it is amusement but maybe it is sincere curiosity because, only too often, melons can be disappointing and if you think somebody might have found a route to the perfect melon, why not ask? This salad is a favorite foil for an Indian curry or even a bowl of Portuguese garlic soup. It’s fresh; it’s naturally sweet; and it’s one of the easiest salads to prepare.*



- 1/4 small, *ripe* cantaloupe**
- 1/4 small, *ripe* honeydew melon**

**1 organic lime—well-scrubbed**

**1/2 organic lime – well-scrubbed**

Peel and seed cantaloupe and honeydew melon. Using a **mandoline**, slice melons into *thin* slices. Arrange on a platter or dinner plate.

Using the **mandoline**, slice the whole lime into thin slices. Lay the lime slices on top of the melon slices.

Using a zester, zest the remaining half lime over the fruit arrangement on the platter. Squeeze the lime half. Pour the lime juice over the fruit slices. Refrigerate until ready to serve.



*Serve chilled.* Refrigerate any leftovers.

Yields 4 servings

Note: This recipe can be halved and doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 1.1 g.; FAT = 0.3 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 13.8 g.;  
CALORIES = 55; CALORIES FROM FAT = 5%



*We're coming to the end of another year  
but these next few weeks can wear us to a frazzle.  
It is time to employ a bit of convenience to ease the dinnertime chaos  
so you can enjoy your holidays.  
Drop by, we'll share a few shortcuts to help bring things under control,*

*Judy*

Please note that all food value calculations are approximate and not the result of chemical analysis.

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