

FOOD



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INSIDE

ARE YOU READY FOR ORANGE SEASON?

Say hello to winter's main squeeze

BY RICK NELSON
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

MINNEAPOLIS—A joy of winter is that supermarket produce sections come alive with a wide range of oranges, varieties that stretch beyond familiar Valencias. Think of blood oranges, with their showy red-orange flesh. Or pink-tinted Cara Caras. Or small, juicy mandarins.

“When it’s cold outside, we have something nice and bright to look forward to,” said Lindsey Wolterstorff, produce manager of Valley Natural Foods in Burnsville, Minn. “We start to see stuff ramping up in December, and by January we’re in the heart of citrus season. It’ll wane out as spring comes in, when lots of little green vegetables can start to grow.”

The appearance of navel oranges (so named because the seedless variety, an ideal eating orange, sports a belly button-like knob) generally heralds the season’s arrival.

“Then it’s satsumas, and then clementines bring on another wave of excitement,” said Alex Christensen, assistant produce manager of the Seward Co-op’s Franklin Avenue store in Minneapolis. “Once the blood oranges hit, people are all citrus, all the time. And that’s great, because it’s the time to do it.”

Kevin Hannigan, co-owner of the Produce Exchange in the Midtown Global Market in Minneapolis, said that year-round availability can make oranges commonplace.

“But when you get great oranges in season, they’re like great peaches at the peak of ripeness. People get excited about them, and we work hard to get the best.”

WHAT THE PROSBUY

Wolterstorff gravitates toward the Cara Cara.

“It’s everything you get in a navel, but they have an herbal, floral quality, and a much more complex flavor,” she said. “They’re orange on the outside, and a beautiful pink on the inside. They’ve got the look of grapefruit without the

sour and bitter qualities that some people don’t like.”

Samuel Philpot is one of two produce buyers at East-side Food Co-op in Minneapolis. He looks forward to the midseason arrival of the TDE mandarin. “They’re a relatively new variety, a mix of Temple, Dancy and Encore mandarins,” he said. “They’re my favorite, by far. The first season that they came in, I was blown away. They have a really nice, tangy profile. They’re not just about sweetness—they have a well-rounded flavor.”

For Christensen, it’s all about the minneola tangelo, the fist-sized, bell-shaped cross between a tangerine and a grapefruit. “They’re the juiciest citrus that we see all season,” he said. “They start out a little watery, but the flavor gets richer and richer as they go on, and they end really well.”

Hannigan’s tastes are more universal. “I love it when we get great navel oranges, and I’m a big fan of sweet-tart citrus, so I love the clementines and the minneolas,” he said. “It sounds silly, but I love them all.”

COOKING WITH ORANGES

Oranges are berries, the fruit of subtropical evergreen trees. The majority of cultivated oranges end up in juice.

If you rely on oranges just for their juice, consider dropping—temporarily, anyway—the ubiquitous Valencia, and replacing (or at least supplementing) it with a blood orange, a Cara Cara or another more colorful and flavorful seasonal fruit.

“The Valencia is the best juicing orange, it’s always

SEE ORANGES, C3



STOCKPHOTO



DREAMSTIME

The Arbor Day Foundation encourages planting hazelnuts for more than just nutrition.

Cozy up to this filbert, that other healthy nut

BY BARBARA QUINN
THE MONTEREY COUNTY HERALD

Nutrition professionals have been singing their praises for years. Nuts (the type you eat) are rich in healthful fats and protein. In fact, a typical 1 ounce serving of nuts (unsalted, please) has as much protein as 2 ounces of meat, according to the most current Dietary Guidelines

for Americans.

We have our favorites, although most experts tell us to enjoy a variety of nuts a few times a week for our best nutritional benefit. One type of nut that is not exactly a staple in this country—although it is the state nut of Oregon—is the acorn-shaped hazelnut (also known as “filbert”). Perhaps that

SEE HAZELNUTS, C2

Italy bucks against trend of fussy coffee

BY CHICO HARLAN
THE WASHINGTON POST

TREVISO, Italy—The coffee shop would have been at home in so many other countries.

But it certainly didn’t seem Italian.

The first oddity was the menu, which included cold brews and pour-overs that are commonplace in Washington or Tokyo—but almost impossible to find in Italy.

The next anomaly was the bar counter. Italians typically down their espressos while standing. This counter had seats.

Then there were the prices. Even in the poshest parts of Rome, an espresso—“un caffè”—sells for 1 euro, or a little more than a dollar. Here, it went for



CHICO HARLAN / WASHINGTON POST

Italian “third-wave” coffee shops face pressure for the widespread expectation for no-fuss coffee.

1.50 euros. Other drinks ran as high as 3.50 euros.

When I walked into Labb Caffettin for the first time two months ago, a barista sporting an apron

and a thick beard took my order, served my drink and talked a little about how the store was trying to introduce specialty coffee—call it artisanal,

craft, pretentious or delicious—to a country that all but created the caffeinated life.

“The Italians don’t know they are drinking such bad coffee,” Matteo Campeotto said, lowering his voice in recognition that he was treading on sacred ground.

As a relative newcomer to Italy, I wasn’t ready to proclaim that the country that invented and perfected the espresso machine has been doing it all wrong. But already I’d been wondering why the modern coffee era, with its new brewing techniques and specialty beans, seemed to have largely passed Italy by.

Most Italian cafes are

SEE COFFEE, C2