



ROOT TO LEAF

A Southern Chef Cooks Through the Seasons

STEVEN SATTERFIELD

Award-Winning Chef of Miller Union in Atlanta

Photography by John Kernick



**BULGUR WHEAT WITH
ROASTED BABY BEETS
AND THEIR TOPS**

Outside of Middle Eastern cuisine, bulgur wheat often conjures images of 1970s health food stores and poorly made versions of tabbouleh. With all the buzz about whole grains these days, this nutty-flavored, par-cooked cracked wheat might be ready for a comeback. Combined with beets in this recipe—which uses every part of the plant—it is a true *Root to Leaf* meal that is delicious and incredibly healthful.

4 servings

- 4 small beets with tops
- 1 cup bulgur
- 2 cups vegetable broth or water, heated
- Kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 shallot, diced
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 4 ounces fresh cheese, such as farmers' cheese or chèvre, crumbled

Trim the tops from the beets and reserve. Wash the roots and roast according to the instructions on page 380. (This can be done a day or two in advance, if desired.)

Wash the tops well and separate the stems from the leaves. Reserve the leaves. Slice the stems crosswise to make small dice, and set aside.

Place the bulgur wheat in a medium bowl. Pour the hot broth over the bulgur and add a pinch of salt. Cover and let sit until the grains swell and become tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Taste for seasoning and set aside.

In a medium skillet over medium-high heat, warm 1 tablespoon olive oil. Add the shallot and beet stems and season with salt and pepper. Cook until the shallot and beet stems are tender, 2 to 3 minutes, and add the beet greens. Using tongs, turn the leaves several times until wilted. Remove from the heat and set aside.

Peel the roasted beets, slice them into quarters, and set aside.

In a large bowl, mix together the cooked bulgur and the sautéed beet greens and stems and stir until combined. Taste for seasoning. Divide the grain mixture among 4 serving bowls. Toss the roasted beets with the lemon juice, salt, and the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil. Divide the dressed beets among the serving bowls. Divide the cheese among the bowls and serve.

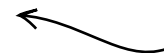
Stems and leaves—look for a bunch with plentiful greens



Drain off any excess broth



Or stir with a wooden spoon



Or smaller, so they're bite size



TROUT FILLETS WITH SAUTÉED FENNEL STEMS AND FRONDS

Most recipes for fennel call for the bulb only. The long stems are flavorful but fibrous, so cooks tend to discard them, feathery fronds and all. To address this problem, I devised an herb sauce that utilizes the fronds, and a quick sauté that features the stems. Note that the cooking method for the trout involves turning the fish at the last minute just before serving. This keeps the flesh moist and tender, and the skin crisp.

4 servings

Get fennel with a lot of fronds, so you have enough for the sauce and the garnish

Stalks and fronds from 2 fennel bulbs
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
1 stalk green garlic
Kosher salt
2 spring leeks
4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
Freshly ground black pepper
4 skin-on trout fillets
2 tablespoons canola oil

Fennel frond sauce: Separate the fronds from the stalks and set the stalks aside. Measure 1/2 packed cup of the fronds and put in the base of a blender pitcher. Reserve some of the remaining fronds for garnish. Add olive oil, green garlic, and a pinch of kosher salt. Blend until combined, then place in a shallow container and chill.

This can be a little chunky

crosswise to break up the stringy fibers

Sautéed fennel stalks and spring leeks: Wash and thinly slice enough fennel stalks to measure about 2 cups. Trim the roots and dark green tops from the leeks and thinly slice the white and light green parts into rings. Transfer the sliced leeks to a medium bowl and fill it with water. Agitate to loosen any sand or dirt and then remove the leeks from the water and transfer to a colander to drip dry. In a wide skillet over medium-high heat, melt the butter. Add the fennel stalks and leeks to the pan and season with salt and pepper. Sauté until tender, about 8 minutes.

This may take a minute or 2 longer

Pan-seared trout fillets: Season the trout fillets on both sides generously with kosher salt and black pepper. In a wide skillet over high heat, warm the canola oil until shimmery. Carefully add the trout fillets skin side down and cook until the skin is crisp and golden brown, 7 to 10 minutes. The thin fillets will be mostly cooked through, so turn off the heat if not ready to serve. When ready, return the pan to the heat and then turn the fillets over and cook for 1 minute.

To serve: Divide the sautéed fennel stalks and leeks among 4 plates. Place the trout fillets on top and drizzle with fennel frond sauce. Garnish with fresh fennel fronds. Serve immediately.





VIVA'S ONE-SKILLET GREENS AND EGGS

To photograph the spring chapter of this book, I wanted to find a mountain location near Asheville, where my mother's ancestors lived. I turned to my friend Mike McGirr, an eccentric chef, forager, and organic food advocate who lives nearby and knows every farmer in the region. He arranged a stay for us at a breathtaking working farm set in the mountains just outside Marshall, called Laughing Frog. When we arrived, we realized we were miles from any nearby restaurant. Mike, already settled in, offered to cook dinner for the crew before we started the shoot the next morning. He whipped up this rustic but elegant one-skillet meal that we all devoured. Mike explained that his great-grandmother, Viva Stewart McGirr, used to make it when he visited her in the 1970s on her little organic farm in California. I thought that this was such an inventive use of bitter dandelion that I asked him if I could include it in the book. He generously obliged. Her recipe calls for cider vinegar in the pan, but to preserve the color of the greens, I've opted to drizzle it on just before serving.

Serves 6

8 slices thick-cut bacon, sliced crosswise into ½-inch pieces
1½ to 2 pounds dandelion greens, washed and spun dry
6 large farm-fresh eggs
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
2 tablespoons apple cider

Or less depending
on the size of
your pan

Nestle the eggs in
between the greens,
closer to the pan,
so they cook faster

Place the bacon in a single layer in a wide cast-iron skillet. Turn the heat on at medium-low and cook the bacon until crispy, stirring occasionally. Divide the dandelion greens into 6 small bundles and add them to the pan, arranging them in a sundial pattern lengthwise from the center of the skillet. Let cook until they begin to wilt, about 1 minute. Turn each bundle over with tongs. Add ½ cup water to keep the greens from browning and to help steam them from the bottom. Make a small crevice between the dandelion bundles. Crack one egg into a small bowl and lower the egg into one of the crevices. Repeat with the remaining crevices until all the eggs are nestled between the dandelion bundles. Season each egg with salt and pepper. Cook until the whites are set but the yolk is still runny, sunny-side-up style. With a spatula, divide each bundle of greens so there is an egg nestled in the center and transfer to 6 serving bowls. In a small bowl, whisk together the cider and vinegar, and spoon over each serving.

Don't skip this—it
pulls everything
together