Fresh flavors

Lemons, oranges, tangerines—nothing adds zest to a meal like citrus

BY JERRY ANNE DI VECCHIO AND CHRISTINE WEBER HALE

Every winter, citrus shows up just in time, doling out a healthy dose of sunshine, color, and immunity-boosting vitamin C. These recipes—designed to get you through the whole day—make the most of citrus season, with a spritz of fresh-squeezed juice here, a spoonful of zest there, and whole segments everywhere possible. From breakfast cereal to salads to one-pan pasta, these dishes are vibrant, easy, and just substantial enough for winter: the perfect cure for the post-holiday blahs.

ON THE COVER

Creamy Rice Cereal with Oranges

Cooked rice cereal is anything but boring when you mix in some marmalade and add crunchy granola on top.

PREP AND COOK TIME: About 20 minutes
MAKES: 4 servings

- **About 3 cups milk (1% or 2% fat)**
- **3/4 cup quick-cooking rice cereal**
- **1 tablespoon orange marmalade**
- **1/2 teaspoon grated orange peel**
- **About 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1 1/2 cups fresh-cut orange segments (see "How to Cut Citrus Segments," page 12)**
- **1/2 cup granola**
- **Maple syrup**

1. In a 1 1/2- to 2-quart pan, whisk 3 cups milk with the rice cereal, marmalade, orange peel, and 1/4 teaspoon salt to blend. Whisk over high heat until mixture is boiling and continue whisking until thickened, about 30 seconds longer. Taste and add salt, if desired.

2. Pour cereal into bowls and top with orange segments. Sprinkle with granola and add maple syrup to taste.

Per serving: 299 cal., 14% (41 cal.) from fat; 10 g protein; 4.6 g fat (2.3 g sat.); 55 g carbo (2.6 g fiber); 245 mg sodium; 7.6 mg chol.

KAREN STEFFENS (FOOD STYLING: ROBYN VALARIK)

Crab Salad with Meyer Lemon–Garlic Dressing

Crab Salad with Meyer Lemon–Garlic Dressing

A streamlined Meyer lemon version of French aioli makes a lively dressing for Dungeness.

PREP TIME: About 25 minutes
MAKES: 4 servings
NOTES: If you're shelling the crab yourself, you'll need about 3 pounds of whole crabs.

- **1/4 cup mayonnaise**
- **1 1/2 teaspoons finely grated Meyer lemon peel**
- **2 tablespoons Meyer lemon juice**
- **1 clove garlic, peeled and minced**
- **2 cups shelled cooked Dungeness crab (see notes)**
- **Salt**
- **3 ounces butter lettuce leaves, rinsed and crisped**
- **1/2 English cucumber (8 oz.), halved lengthwise, and cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices**

1. In a large bowl, whisk mayonnaise, lemon peel, lemon juice, and garlic to blend. Add crab and mix gently to coat. Add salt to taste.

2. Arrange lettuce leaves on four salad plates. Spoon crab salad onto lettuce and arrange cucumber slices alongside.

Per serving: 189 cal., 57% (108 cal.) from fat; 16 g protein; 12 g fat (1.8 g sat.); 3.1 g carbo (0.5 g fiber); 300 mg sodium; 86 mg chol.

WINE PAIRING

Crab Salad with Meyer Lemon–Garlic Dressing: A Pinot Gris with plenty of smooth citrus and minerals, such as Etude 2004 Pinot Gris *(Carneros, CA; $24)*.

TIP FROM THE TEST KITCHEN

How to cut citrus segments

1 With a small, sharp knife, cut ends off of the fruit, down to the flesh.

2 Set fruit on one cut end on a board. Following its curve with the knife, slice off peel and white pith, down to the flesh.

3 Hold fruit over a strainer set over a small bowl to catch juice, and cut between inner membranes and fruit to release segments; drop segments into strainer. Squeeze juice from membranes into bowl.

Pink Grapefruit Granita

An icy dessert can make a nice finish for a hearty winter dinner. This one's tart and sweet at the same time.

PREP TIME: About 30 minutes, plus at least 4 hours to freeze
MAKES: About 6 servings

- **3 pink grapefruit (10 to 12 oz. each), cut into segments (see "How to Cut Citrus Segments," at left), juice reserved**
- **4 cups purchased unsweetened pink grapefruit juice**
- **2/3 cup sugar**

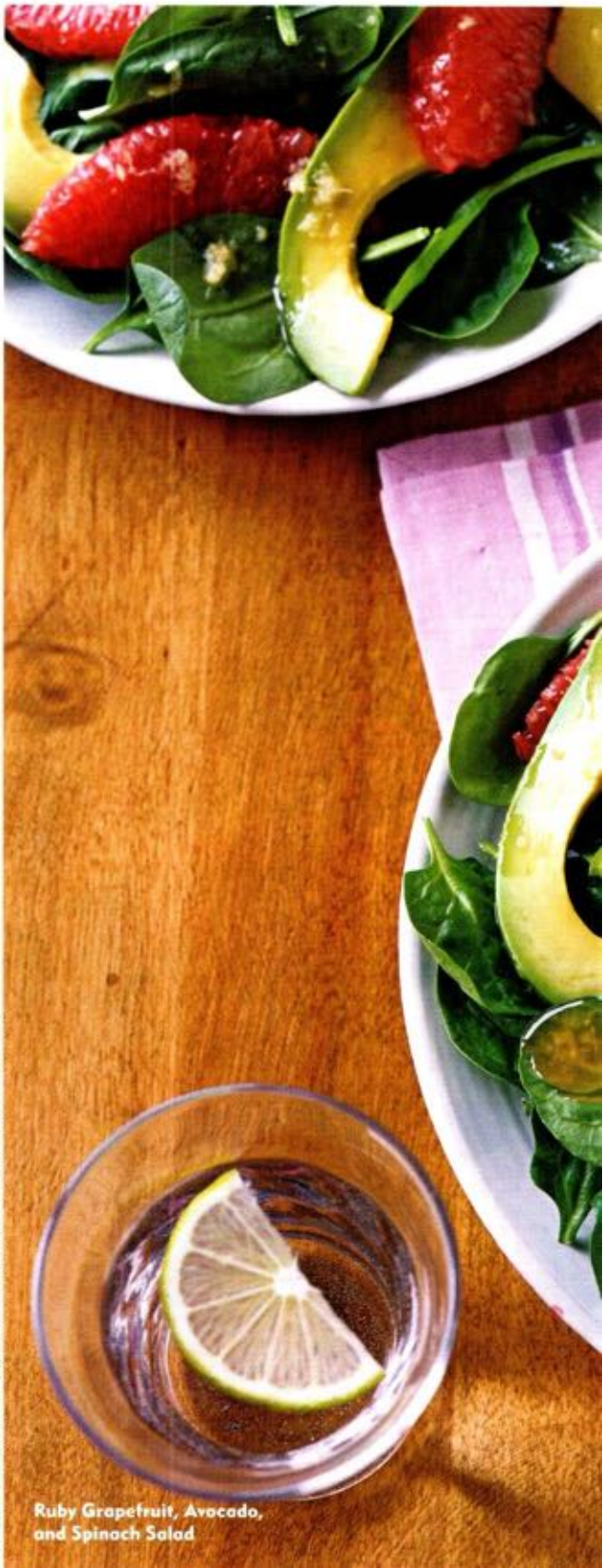
1. In a bowl, stir fresh grapefruit juice, purchased grapefruit juice, and sugar until sugar is dissolved. Pour into a 9- by 13-inch baking pan, cover with plastic wrap, and freeze until solid, at least 4 hours, or up to 1 day.

2. Coarsely chop grapefruit segments. Cover and chill until ready to use, up to 1 day.

3. When juice mixture is frozen, quickly scrape with the tines of a fork to break it up and form fluffy crystals.

4. Scoop granita into wineglasses or serving bowls. Top with chopped grapefruit segments and serve immediately.

Per serving: 170 cal., 0% (1.8 cal.) from fat; 1.2 g protein; 0.2 g fat (0 g sat.); 42 g carbo (0.4 g fiber); 1.9 mg sodium; 0 mg chol.



Ruby Grapefruit, Avocado, and Spinach Salad

FROM LEFT: E. SPENCER TOY (2); KAREN STEFFENS (FOOD STYLING: ROBYN VALARIK)

Ruby Grapefruit, Avocado, and Spinach Salad

Add a twist to that longtime favorite winter salad combo—grapefruit and avocado—with fresh ginger and rice vinegar.

PREP TIME: About 10 minutes
MAKES: 4 servings

- **3 1/2 cups baby spinach, rinsed and drained**
- **3 ruby grapefruit (1 lb. each), cut into segments (see "How to Cut Citrus Segments," opposite), juice reserved**
- **1 firm-ripe avocado (about 8 oz.), pitted, peeled, and thinly sliced**
- **2 tablespoons rice vinegar**
- **2 tablespoons Asian fish sauce**
- **2 teaspoons minced fresh ginger**
- **2 1/2 teaspoons sugar**

1. Arrange spinach on four salad plates. Arrange grapefruit segments and avocado on spinach.

2. Measure 3 tablespoons grapefruit juice (save any extra for other uses) and, in a small bowl, whisk with vinegar, fish sauce, ginger, and sugar to blend. Spoon dressing over salads.

Per serving: 173 cal., 39% (67 cal.) from fat; 4.2 g protein; 7.4 g fat (1.2 g sat.); 26 g carbo (4.8 g fiber); 395 mg sodium; 0 mg chol.

WINE PAIRING

Ruby Grapefruit, Avocado, and Spinach Salad: An off-dry Riesling with honey, pear, and citrus notes, like Covey Run 2004 Riesling *(Columbia Valley, WA; $8).*

EASY TREAT

Spiced Tangerine Tea

In a 4- to 5-quart pan over high heat, bring 4 cups **water** to a boil. Add 5 **chai spice** or cinnamon **tea bags,** remove from heat, and let steep 5 minutes. Press tea bags against pan side to extract as much flavor as possible; discard bags. Add 1 quart **fresh tangerine juice** and 1/2 cup firmly packed **brown sugar** to pan; whisk until sugar is dissolved. To serve hot, return pan to low heat and stir often until tea is steaming (don't let it simmer or boil); float some **tangerine slices** in pan for decoration. To serve cold, pour tea over ice in tall glasses and garnish rims with tangerine slices.

Per cup: 106 cal., 0.1% (9 cal.) from fat; 0.6 g protein; 0.2 g fat (0 g sat.); 26 g carbo (0 g fiber); 11 mg sodium; 0 mg chol.

Citrus Pudding Cake

An old-fashioned pudding cake is easier to make than most people think, and it hits the spot in winter.

PREP AND COOK TIME: 1 hour
MAKES: 6 servings

- **About 2 tablespoons butter**
- **3/4 cup sugar**
- **2 teaspoons grated orange peel**
- **3 large eggs, separated**
- **3 tablespoons orange juice**
- **3 tablespoons lemon juice**
- **1/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1/8 teaspoon salt**
- **1 cup whole milk**
- **Thin slices of peeled oranges (seeds discarded)**

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Butter a 5- to 6-cup soufflé or other deep, straight-sided baking dish.

2. In a large bowl, with a mixer on high speed, beat 2 tablespoons butter with 1/2 cup of the sugar and the orange peel. Add the egg yolks, orange and lemon juices, flour, and salt; beat on medium speed until well blended. Add milk and beat just until combined.

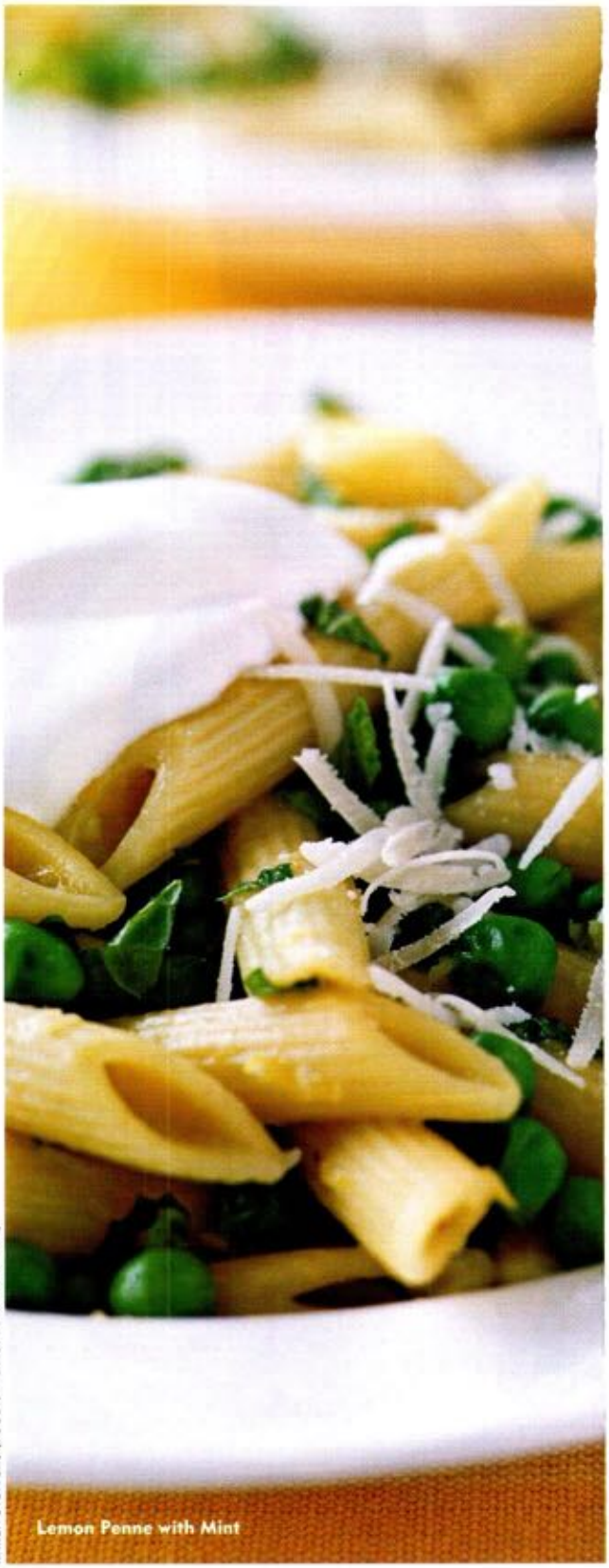
3. In another bowl, with clean beaters, whip egg whites on high speed until foamy. Gradually add remaining 1/4 cup sugar; continue whipping until whites hold stiff peaks.

4. Stir about a fourth of the egg whites into the citrus mixture until well blended, then gently but thoroughly fold in remaining whites. Pour mixture into prepared dish (batter may come to the rim).

5. Set dish in an 8- by 8-inch baking pan; place pan on lowest rack in oven. Carefully pour enough boiling water into pan to come halfway up sides of soufflé dish. Bake until cake is richly browned on top and firm in the center when gently shaken, 40 to 45 minutes.

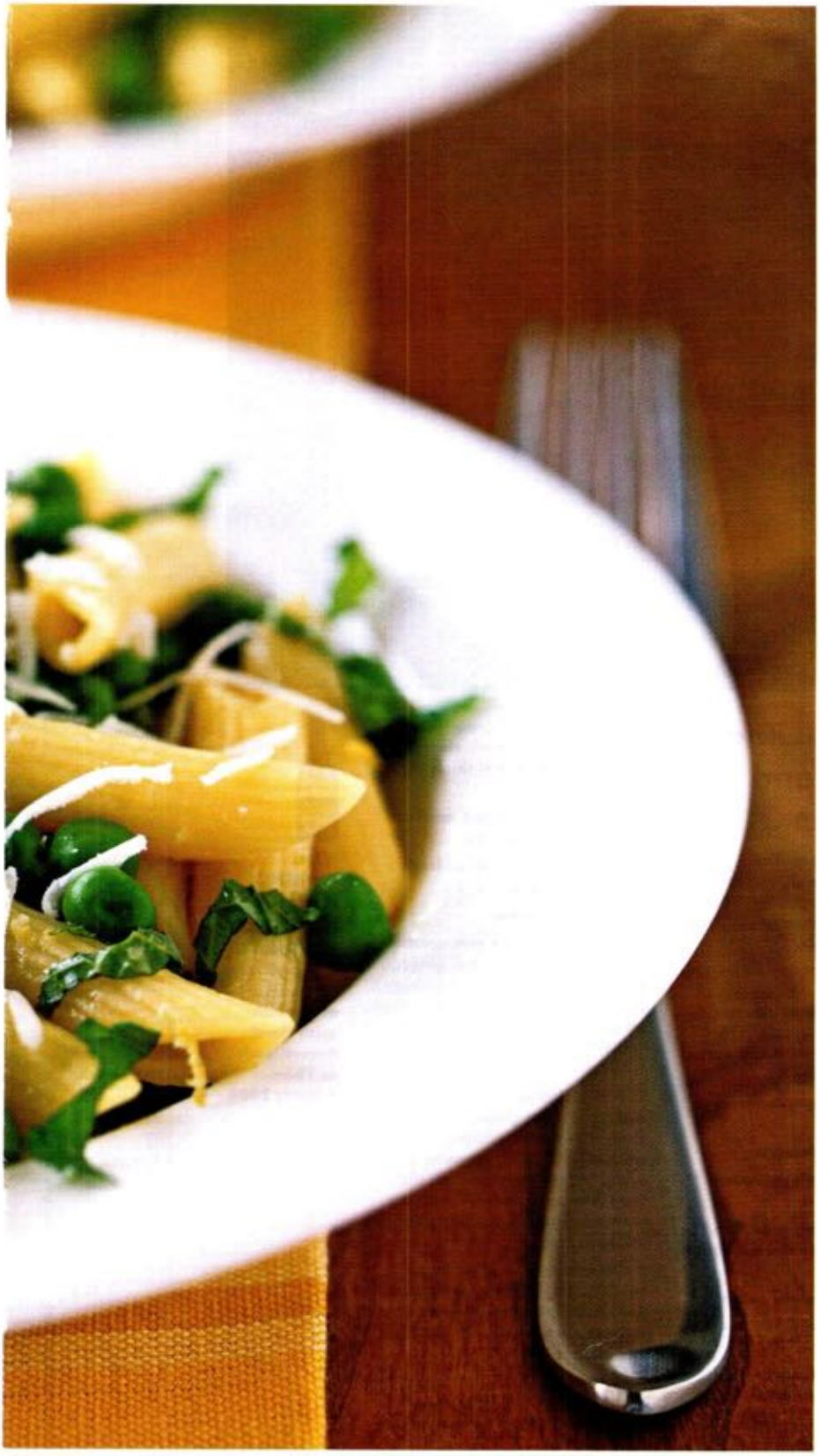
6. Serve hot, warm, or cool (cake settles slowly as it cools), scooping portions of the browned layer on top into bowls and surrounding with the sauce that forms in the bottom of the baking dish. Garnish servings with orange slices.

Per serving: 217 cal., 32% (69 cal.) from fat; 5.1 g protein; 7.7 g fat (4 g sat.); 33 g carbo (0.2 g fiber); 145 mg sodium; 122 mg chol.



Lemon Penne with Mint

KAREN STEFFENS (FOOD STYLING: ROBYN VALARIK)



Lemon Penne with Mint

It takes only one pan to make this light pasta. For a heartier version, sprinkle thinly sliced prosciutto or serrano ham over the top.

PREP AND COOK TIME: 30 minutes
MAKES: 4 or 5 servings

- **3 cups chicken broth**
- **2 tablespoons finely grated lemon peel**
- **12 ounces dried penne pasta**
- **2 cups frozen petite peas**
- **3 tablespoons lemon juice**
- **1/2 cup chopped mint leaves**
- **About 1/2 cup shredded parmesan cheese**
- **About 1/2 cup sour cream**

1. In a 5-quart pan, bring chicken broth and 1 1/2 cups water to a boil. Add lemon peel and pasta; then simmer, stirring occasionally, until pasta is tender to bite, 10 to 14 minutes. Stir in peas and cook 30 seconds longer.

2. Remove from heat and let pasta stand, stirring several times, to absorb more liquid, 5 to 8 minutes.

3. Stir lemon juice and half the mint into pasta. Ladle into bowls and sprinkle with remaining mint and the parmesan cheese. Add a dollop of sour cream to each serving, and pass more to add to taste.

Per serving: 408 cal., 19% (78 cal.) from fat; 21 g protein; 8.7 g fat (4.7 g sat.); 61 g carbo (4.9 g fiber); 278 mg sodium; 16 mg chol.

WINE PAIRING

Lemon Penne with Mint: A citrusy Sauvignon Blanc with grassy notes echoes the lemon and mint in the pasta. Try Hall 2004 *(Napa Valley; $20)*.

Coconut-Lime Chicken and Rice Soup

For this quick take on Thai coconut-chicken soup, you can even buy the roast chicken from a good deli (a 2-pounder will yield about 4 cups of meat).

PREP AND COOK TIME: 40 minutes
MAKES: 2 1/2 quarts; 6 servings
NOTES: If you want to give the soup more of a kick, add 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon hot chile flakes to the broth mixture in step 1.

- **5 cups fat-skimmed chicken broth**
- **1/3 cup fresh lime juice**
- **1/4 cup thinly sliced fresh ginger**
- **2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed with the flat side of a knife**
- **3 tablespoons soy sauce**
- **3 tablespoons firmly packed brown sugar**
- **2 cans (14 oz. each) reduced-fat coconut milk**
- **4 cups bite-size pieces cooked chicken**
- **1 fresh red or green jalapeño chile (optional), rinsed, stemmed, and thinly sliced crosswise**
- **3 cups hot cooked medium-grain white rice**
- **1/2 cup thinly slivered fresh basil leaves**
- **Lime wedges**

1. In a 4- to 5-quart pan, combine chicken broth, lime juice, ginger, garlic, soy sauce, and brown sugar. Bring to a boil over high heat, then cover, reduce heat, and simmer until flavors are blended, about 20 minutes.

2. With a slotted spoon, lift out and discard the ginger slices and garlic cloves. Add coconut milk, chicken, and sliced jalapeño (if using) to broth mixture. Stir the soup over medium-high heat just until hot, 5 to 6 minutes; don't let the soup boil.

3. Divide rice among six soup bowls. Sprinkle with slivered basil and spoon soup over the top. Garnish with lime wedges to squeeze into soup to taste.

Per serving: 459 cal., 27% (126 cal.) from fat; 39 g protein; 14 g fat (6.3 g sat.); 44 g carbo (0.4 g fiber); 696 mg sodium; 83 mg chol. ●

WINE PAIRING

Coconut-Lime Chicken and Rice Soup: A dry or off-dry Gewürztraminer with spicy floral flavors, such as Thomas Fogarty 2004 *(Monterey, CA; $17)*.

KAREN STEFFENS (FOOD STYLING: ROBYN YALARIK)