

# RECIPES

## Summer 2020

*Tree of Life Nursery does not promote the wild harvesting of any native plant species. Please get permission from any land owner before collecting. Collect sustainably and remember that what is left for nature, nature uses. It is our hope that these recipes inspire you to plant these species in your own yards.*



## Lemonade Berry Juice

*Rhus integrifolia (lemonade berry) is in the same family as cashews and mango. If you are allergic to these, please refrain from handling or ingesting this plant*

Collect 1 cup *Rhus integrifolia* seeds – should be red with a sticky outer coating when ripe  
Soak in two cups of water for 24-48 hours (depending on how tart you want it!)

Strain the seeds from the liquid  
Use a fine mesh strainer to filter remaining sediments

Keep refrigerated

# Cocktails

## Verdugo Canyon Margarita

Blend fruit of 4 prickly pear with 1 cup  
lemonade berry juice

Strain the juice

2 oz prickly pear lemonade berry mix

2 oz Tequila

1 oz fresh lime juice

1 oz triple sec or other orange liqueur

## Rhus-tic Sour

2oz whiskey or bourbon

2oz lemonade berry juice

1 dash orange bitters

½ oz Simple syrup (optional)

Garnish with Maraschino cherry or  
orange peel (optional)



(949)728-0685  
33201 Ortega Hwy  
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

[www.CaliforniaNativePlants.com](http://www.CaliforniaNativePlants.com)

© Copyright 2020 Tree of Life Nursery (TOLN).  
For reposting and all other uses, please credit TOLN.

# Nopales

## Collecting the Nopal Pads:

Many cultivated varieties have been selected over the years for their taste and minimized spines (thorns and glaucids). *Opuntia ficus-indica* is a commonly used selection and a historical strain used here at Tree of Life Nursery. Native species, such as Coastal prickly pear (*Opuntia littoralis*), can be used but will require more care with the thorns.

Look for the pads that are the new growth of the *Opuntia* plant. Select pads that are 6-10" long that appear to have the shiner green surface still.

## Preparing Nopales:

1. Use a sharp knife to shave off the spines and cut the edges off the pads.
2. Rinse with water for final cleaning.

## How to enjoy Nopales:

**Raw:** Add a dash of salt and lemon. Don't be afraid of the Baba (viscous material that exudes from the cut nopal); this is very healthy.

**On the Grill:** Prepare with a dash of salt and lemon. Place the prepared pads directly on the grill on medium heat. Cook on each side for about 2 minutes until slightly charred. They should be soft and dark green when ready. Slice and serve.

***Ensalada de Nopales*** (Cactus Salad) – Abe Sanchez  
from "Cooking the Native Way," Chia Café Collective, pg. 108.

Use 1-2 raw or cooked nopal pads, chopped.

In a large bowl, toss and mix evenly with Pico de Gallo.

4 handfuls of chopped Roma tomatoes.

Chopped cilantro

1 cup onion, chopped.

1 serrano or jalapeño chili, chopped.

1 can pinto beans - fresh or cooked (drained).

Salt to taste.

Squeeze about one lemon and one lime.

Top with 1 cup of queso fresco (or Feta cheese).

# Dessert

## Woolly Blue-Cake

### Ingredients:

#### Cake

- 5 large egg whites at room temperature
- 1/2 cup whole milk at room temperature
- 1/2 cup heavy cream at room temperature
- 2½ tsp pure vanilla extract
- 3 cups cake flour or flour of your choice. Sift flour
- 1¾ cups sugar or honey
- 1 tbsp + 1 tsp baking powder
- ¾ tsp salt
- 12 tbsp unsalted butter, at room temperature and cut into cubes
- 3 tbsp fresh woolly blue curl leaves and flowers chopped

#### Frosting

- 1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature/slightly melted
- 4-6 cups powdered sugar
- ¾ cup heavy cream
- 3-4 sage flowers for garnish
- 3-4 woolly blue curl flowers for garnish
- ¼ tsp sea salt to sprinkle on the cake ½ tsp of vanilla extract
- 3 tbsp fresh woolly blue curl leaves and flowers chopped

### Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F.
2. Prepare milk for the cake by adding it to a small pan with the chopped woolly blue curl leaves and flowers. Simmer for 20 minutes. Let it sit and cool to room temperature.
3. In a medium bowl combine the egg whites and vanilla. Set aside.
4. In an electric mixer combine flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt together on low speed for 30 seconds. Add the butter, and mix on low speed until just combined.
5. Strain the chopped bits of woolly blue curl from the milk and add the milk to the mixture and mix until just combined.
6. Increase to medium speed and mix for 1-2 minutes until light and airy.
7. Add the egg mixture in, beat until it is combined.
8. Place mixture in a buttered or sprayed pan of your choice. I prefer smaller tins that bake for about 20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.
9. Let the cake cool and keep in the refrigerator until it is time to frost.
10. Prepare milk for frosting by adding it to a small pan and simmering it with the chopped woolly blue curl leaves for 20 minutes. Let site to cool to room temperature.
11. Beat the butter until it is creamy and light-colored and add the powdered sugar slowly
12. Mix in the cream and vanilla until you get it gets to a consistency that you like. Firmer icing can be easier to decorate with. You can add more milk to create more of a glaze.
13. When icing the cake top it off with some woolly blue curl and sage flowers and sprinkle a little bit of sea salt on top to make those flavors pop!