Chris’s Comment
“The Jerusalem Artichoke is a big beautiful plant. It needs space but will provide good cover for the birds and amphibians that will tackle those slugs and snails. The only planting rule is to avoid poor draining soils so, if needed, add silver sand and organic matter to the planting site. Dig up the tubers after the leaves turn yellow and cook immediately as they taste best just after lifting.”

In 2009, Head Teacher Jared Brading was contacted by a local allotment organisation who wanted to find new plots for their oversubscribed lists. They began by creating 8 raised beds, one for each class to get growing. Now the school hosts two volunteer gardeners and nearly all available green space is used for growing produce. Chickens provide eggs for parents and the after-school Cooking Club and there is a weekly Gardening Club keeping teachers and students from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 busy. There are plans for some additional raised beds in the KS1 playground to involve younger children with the growing.

What’s Growing in Autumn?
- Green Tomatoes
- Rainbow Chard
- Swiss Chard
- Rocket
- Beetroot
- Jerusalem artichokes
- Turnips
- Carrots
- Mint
- Chives
- Sage
- Rosemary
- Parsley

Tommi’s Pick
Green tomatoes, freshly laid eggs, Jerusalem artichokes and herbs.

Home Grown Hints
“Remember to water your plants, even in Autumn!”

Sacred Heart Kitchen Garden

Home Grown Hints
“Remember to water your plants, even in Autumn!”
Rainbow Chard Baked Eggs with Jerusalem Artichoke Bruschetta and Green Tomato Salsa

Ingredients

Serves 8

For the Rainbow Chard Baked Eggs
8 free-range eggs
1 bunch rainbow chard, washed and the stalks and leaves separated.
2 sage leaves, finely chopped
1 small bunch rocket
2 tbsp crème fraîche
3 tbsp Pecorino cheese, grated and some extra to sprinkle
1 garlic glove, peeled and left whole
Grated nutmeg to season
Parsley, finely chopped for decoration
Olive oil

For the Bruschetta with Jerusalem artichokes
10 Jerusalem artichokes, scrubbed clean and cut into 2cm disks
8 slices sourdough bread
½ onion, finely chopped
Handful of oregano leaves, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, peeled and finely chopped
1 garlic clove, peeled and left whole
Parsley, finely chopped for decoration
Pecorino, grated to sprinkle on top

For the Green Tomato Salsa
20 small green tomatoes, washed and cut into quarters
A handful of roughly chopped coriander
A handful of chopped mint
½ onion, finely chopped
5 tbsp cider vinegar
5 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
½ tsp sugar
½ red chilli, seeds removed, finely chopped

Method

1 Heat the oven to 170/350/gas 3. Butter the ramekins using greaseproof paper. Chop the chard leaves into fine ribbons and the stalks into 1 inch sticks.
2 Heat a frying pan with a splash of oil on a medium heat, add the chard leaves, and quickly sauté for 2 minutes. Add the rocket, chopped sage, whole garlic clove, pinch of grated nutmeg and a pinch of salt and pepper. Leave to simmer for 6-8 minutes.
3 Boil a small pan of salted water, and add the chard stalks. Blanche for 10 minutes or until soft and drain in a colander.
4 Heat another frying pan on a medium heat with a splash of oil and sweat the onions and chopped garlic for 5 minutes. Add the artichokes, oregano and some boiling water to half cover them. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper. Cover with a lid and cook the artichokes for 20 minutes then check that they’re soft with the tip of a knife and remove from heat.
5 Remove the whole garlic clove from the chard, add the crème fraîche and cheese then give it a stir.
6 Line up your ramekins and place a small layer of the chard mixture at the bottom of each then crack an egg over the top. Be careful not to break the yolk! Top it off with a small knob of butter, a teaspoon of crème fraîche, a tiny amount of salt and pepper, a sprinkle of Pecorino and some parsley to decorate.
7 Place the ramekins on a baking sheet and cook for approximately 15 minutes until the whites are set and the yolks a little runny.
8 Whilst the eggs are in the oven, make your salsa by mixing the onions and cider vinegar in a bowl. Add a pinch of salt, pepper and the sugar. In another bowl mix the tomatoes with the mint, coriander, rocket, chilli and olive oil. Pour the onion and vinegar mixture in with the tomatoes and stir all the ingredients together. Easy!
9 To assemble the Bruschetta, toast the bread until golden then rub with the whole garlic clove. Place the chopped artichokes on top of the toast and sprinkle with pecorino and chopped parsley. Serve alongside the salsa and baked eggs.

Equipment

8 x ramekins
1 x slopped spoon
1 x chopping board
1 x sharp knife
2 x frying pans
1 x small saucepan
1 x grater
2 x mixing bowls
1 x baking tray
1 x colander
1 x wooden spoon
Greaseproof paper

Cook’s Code

Don’t have a lid? Make a Cartouche; a round piece of greaseproof paper that acts as a lid to keep moisture in.

Bruschetta: an Italian snack of toasted bread rubbed with garlic and topped with extra-virgin olive oil, salt and pepper.

Sweat: to cook slowly over a low-medium heat with the saucepan lid on so that the onions go soft and transparent, not crispy and brown.