



TUV HASHAVUA

BEST OF THE WEEK

Finding and Caring For My Perfect Knife

Maki Hoashi, Member, Tuv Ha'Aretz CSA

MANY THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS !

11/3 [Wk #24- B]

5-8pm Pick-up

Fiana Tulchishkaya

Lenny Fuchs

Tabia Heywot

1:00pm Truck Unloading

Tanessa Cabe Harte

**Valeria Vavassori-
Chen**

8pm Unclaimed Shares

Takashi Yoneta

11/10 [Wk #25 - A]

5-8pm Pick-up

Janet Schultz

Israel Wertentheil

Barry Bank

3:45pm Truck Unloading

Brian Gardner

Hoashi

Marci Birnbaum

8pm Unclaimed Shares

Farah Diaz-Tello

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goldenearthworm.com
- **FHJC:** www.fhjc.org
- **Hazon:** www.hazon.org

In culinary school, we were expected to use standard-issued knives, which makes a lot of sense – everyone can learn the standard way to cut, dice, mince, and it's easier to demonstrate and assess if we are all using the same equipment. Some of us grow so attached to our school knives that changing equipment becomes a scary thing, and we use our school-issued cutlery for a long time after we get our diplomas and certificates.

Knives are a cook's favorite obsession. Optimally, it should be an extension of your arm – you almost stop thinking about it while you're using your knives. *Bon Appetit* assistant editor Amiel Stanek likens buying a knife to purchasing a car – you can do it like a commuter, or you can approach it like you're suffering a mid-life crisis. "You're going to use it every day, so find one that looks and, most important, feels exactly the way you want it to. Don't even think about buying a knife online unless you've held it in your hand first, gauging the weight, size, and shape."

Knives should be honed at home with a steel before every use, but experts often recommend they be sent out to be sharpened professionally. Institute of Culinary Education's knife skills instructor Norman Weinstein explains that the "the learning curve for doing it yourself is so high."

Blair McCreary, who owns a busy knife sharpening business, says of knives he received to sharpen, "You can buy it rusted at a garage sale rummage box for 10-cents, have it sharpened and cleaned, and even re-shaped by a good professional – and love it. You can invest a small fortune in a knife with a look and feel you can't live without. The best knife is the one you love using; don't be ashamed of how you got it."

McCreary understands the emotional connection people have with their knives. "My job is to keep the knife in top condition, no matter how you came upon it. I understand – and I'll take great care of it and return it to you better than before."

Stanek provides his thoughts on what to look for in a knife purchase:

An 8" knife is about right for most people: It's got the best ratio of mass to usable cutting surface. Go smaller if that really feels too long or heavy for you, or if you cook in really tight quarters, but don't take it down more than an inch. And bigger is not necessarily better. A foot-long chef's knife might look cool, but ... that's about it.

A lot of cooks reach for Japanese-style knives these days. They tend to be light, with thin blades made of extremely hard, sharp steel. But blades that hard are also brittle, which means they're more prone to chip if they accidentally run up against something hard, like a bone. Western-style knives tend to be burlier, with thicker, heavier blades that feel better to some people and can take more of a beating.

At its sharpest, carbon steel is sharper than stainless, and will stay that way longer. But it also requires rigorous and heavy maintenance: It needs to be dried thoroughly and oiled after use, otherwise it'll discolor or rust, like a cast-iron pan. It's a commitment. For most people, easy-to-care-for high-quality stainless is better than good: It's good enough.

Brian Gardner Hoashi (the husband is my sous chef) chooses his knives first by the weight of knife – not too heavy nor too light, and it must feel balanced in his hand. He has and uses a lot of different styles of knives, depending on the tasks: he likes Japanese knives (the square-tipped *usuba* for vegetables, or a thick wedge-shaped *deba* for cleaver-style chopping); French style forged knives made by German companies for their heft and edge, especially when doing a lot of production style cooking. He likes the short paring and long slicing blades found in plastic-handled stamped knives with thin blades for butchering and for when a thinner knife will help reduce drag through the food he's preparing. He has several granton-edged knives

with the little dimples along the blade's faces for this feature, for both Japanese and Western blades. Over time, his preferences have changed with experience and education, and new knife styles (such as his hybrid style granton *santoku*) can make it into the rotation, and others can drop off.

In our kitchen, the husband and I do not share knives, even though I don't generally have a preference in knife style. I do like them to stay sharp between uses, meaning he has to use his own knives, or otherwise sharpen mine more frequently (he's the family knife grinder, sharpening my mother's knives on demand). And since he has stronger preferences, I won't risk using a knife he wants at any particular time; ergo, no sharing of knives.

Chef Jacques Pepin, a dean of the International Culinary Institute, has told generations of students that there is no need for more than one good well-maintained knife, upon which you can rely for everything. He admits to owning over 300 knives – most are gifts from friends, fans, and manufacturers. But he has demonstrated that he can use any knife of any style, because the maestro is not tied to set of blades. In Pepin's case, his talent, long experience, his practiced techniques, and the confidence in his skills are more important than his tools.

Bon Appetit senior food editor Chris Morocco also points out that a serious cook has no need to become a knife collector. You only need a few knives, and culinary schools will tell you the same: you can do pretty much everything with three workhorse knives:

An 8" chef's knife is considered as a sharp extension of your hand. The blade is long enough to slice every vegetable, and the tip is fine enough for delicate work.

A paring knife should be small enough to hold above the cutting board, with a fine, maneuverable point – such as hulling strawberries or coring tomatoes.

A bread knife is useful for cutting through hard crusty bread, slicing the ripest tomatoes, or for peeling a pineapple.

There are many resources online to show you how to use and maintain your knives, and hands-on classes are available from accredited cooking schools, to a private workshop in someone's kitchen. It's important to know how to keep your knives sharp, how to store them properly, and how to use them to cut a variety of foods: hard carrots and dense potatoes require different skills than filleting a fish or slicing bread.

Skills are very important in cooking, as are the tools to improve your experience and results. It's worth paying attention to your knives and seeking ones that work for you. And you never know: what's to say that 10-cent garage sale blade, or the cool knife you spent a lot on won't turn out to be the knife of your dreams?

Maki Hoashi is an avid cook; the husband is the sous chef and bread baker. They post their daily meal photos on Facebook.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX??

Broccoli, Guy Lon (Chinese Broccoli), Sweet Potatoes (Orange, Korean White), Golden Turnips, Parsley, Arugula

MATANG: CRISP CARAMEL KOREAN SWEET POTATO

Lauren Chattman, maangchi.com | Serves 4

1 lb Korean sweet potato, peeled, rinsed, pat dry
vegetable oil, for frying (about 5+ cups)

¼ cup sugar

black sesame seeds, for garnish

Slice sweet potato into triangle-shaped wedges, about two bites in size (about 2 inches wide and ½ inch thick).

Heat vegetable oil in a wok or large frying pan to heat. Oil is hot enough when rapid bubbles escape the end of a bamboo chopstick immersed in the hot oil. Fry the chunks of sweet potato over medium-high heat till golden brown, about 6-8 minutes. Set over a rack to drain while you make the syrup:

In a heavy-bottomed pan, spread 1 tbsp vegetable oil, then sprinkle ¼ cup of white sugar evenly. Heat over medium for a few minutes till the sugar starts to melt. Simmer for 7-8 minutes more till the sugar turns golden-brown – do not stir with a spoon – just swirl the pan.

Add the fried sweet potatoes to the syrup and gently mix to coat. Lay on a parchment paper lined tray in a flat layer to prevent sticking. Sprinkle with black sesame seeds. Allow to cool till the candy coating hardens, and transfer to a serving platter to serve.

GUY LON & TURNIP STIR-FRY | sangleefarms.com | Serves 4

2 turnips or radishes (such as daikon or hakurei)	2 tbsp vegetable oil
10 stalks guy lon (tops reserved for another use)	1 tbsp vegetable broth
1/2 onion	1 tsp rice vinegar
1 bunch scallions	drizzle of sesame oil
1 clove garlic	kosher salt and pepper
1 small bunch cilantro	1 tbsp toasted sesame seeds
	1 tsp diced ginger
	2 tsp oyster sauce

Peel turnips, guy lon stalks, onions, and scallions and cut into matchsticks. Mince garlic and cilantro.

Heat wok over very high heat. Add the oil to the very hot pan, and quickly add the garlic, onion, broth, and vinegar and stir for a minute. Add the turnips and guy lon stems and toss for 3-4 minutes or until slightly crunchy but not tough. Add ginger, oyster sauce, scallions, and half the cilantro. Stir for another minute. Finish with sesame seeds, salt, pepper and drizzle with sesame oil. Enjoy this early fall stir-fry over pasta or rice!

WINTER SHARE!

DEADLINE 11/15

VEGGIE SHARE - \$95

Also available for Winter Share members:

- Apple Share - \$15
- Purcell Mountain:
 - Beans (3 x 1lb - \$13)
 - Grains (3 x 1lb - \$18; or 1 x 3lb - \$10.50)
 - Flours (4 lbs total - \$13)

Please see your email for details!

Coffee, Tea, Chocolate also available to Winter and Summer members!