

fine Cooking

KNIFE SKILLS
How to Slice and Dice, p. 20



Flank Steak **TACOS!**

Pork Tenderloin
4 New Twists
You'll Love

LEEEKS:
Take a Fresh Look

Easy Steps to
Make Perfect
GNOCCHI

**SHRIMP
& GRITS**
2 Remakes
of a Classic

Throw a
**Frontier-
Inspired
Feast**

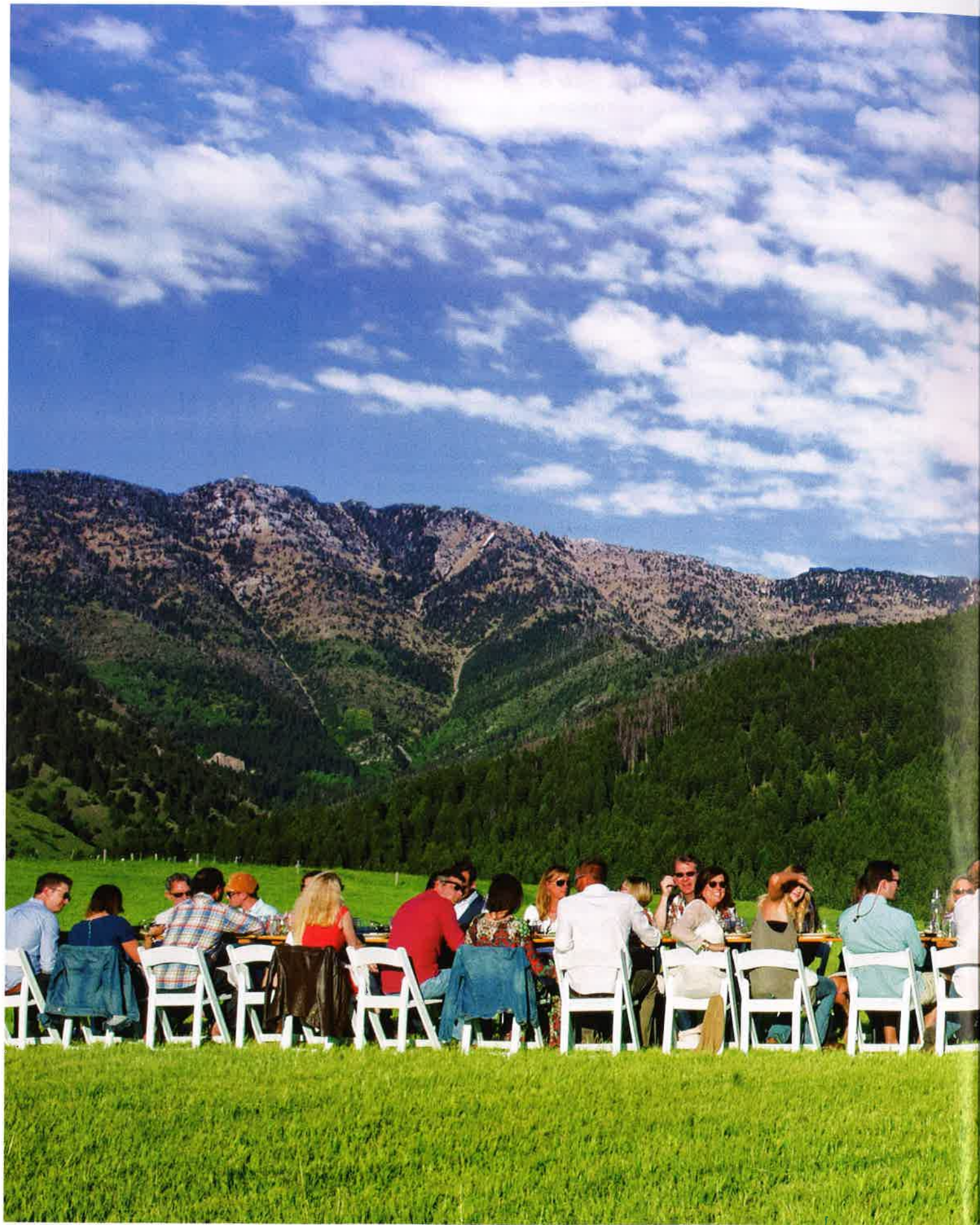


APRIL/MAY 2017 • No.146
www.finecooking.com

\$6.95 \$7.95 Canada



Korean Flank Steak Tacos, p. 34



BIG SKY COOKING

A chuck wagon dinner on the banks of a rushing river?

An open-fire feast for 50 in the foothills?

This is dining, Montana-style.

BY NANETTE MAXIM

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BLEACHER+EVERARD



MONTANA'S BIG SKY COUNTRY boasts some of America's most magnificent land, with rivers running through it, the Gallatin and Bridger mountain ranges of the Rockies jutting skyward, Yellowstone National Park not far to its south, plus a vast variety of wildlife, including elk, moose, bighorn sheep, black and grizzly bears, and wolves. To farm and cook here, it's helpful to love the outdoor life and be up for some challenges. "It hails through July, the first snow can be in early October, and there's only a 90-day growing season," explains Bozeman chef, hunter, and entrepreneur Eduardo Garcia. "I don't live here because the climate cooperates," he says with a laugh. "I live here because it's still a wild place."

Garcia is part of a tight-knit food community in Montana, a collection of kindred spirits who are here not because the living comes easy, but because they love this beautiful, rugged place.

Our *Moveable Feast* TV crew and host Pete Evans headed west to meet, cook, and forage with the people who wouldn't live anywhere ➡



ABOVE: Host Pete Evans and chefs Melissa Harrison and Eduardo Garcia are ready to serve guests at Willow Spring Ranch. **BELOW:** Pete fly-fishing with guide Garrett Blackburn on the Madison River. **LEFT:** Eduardo enjoys a trek foraging for cattails and nettles. **OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP:** Melissa and Pete prepping for the feast. **CENTER:** Mixologist Rick Visser on his way to set up the bar. **BOTTOM:** Guests enjoy a delicious local and sustainable meal with an incredible view.





fruit and nut salad with mixed greens and pickled raisins

Warming the herbs in the vinegar infuses the dressing with flavor. The addition of sweet pickled raisins is the perfect foil for the richness of the nuts.

Serves 6 to 8

- ½ cup white balsamic vinegar**
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme**
- 2 dried bay leaves**
- 1 Tbs. yellow mustard seeds**
- 2 tsp. honey**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- ½ cup golden raisins**
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 8 oz. (12 cups) mixed greens, such as arugula, spinach, and mustard greens**
- 2 fresh apricots, or 4 dried, thinly sliced**
- ½ cup walnuts, toasted and coarsely chopped**

- ½ cup sliced almonds, toasted**
- ½ cup sunflower seeds, toasted**

In a 2-quart saucepan, combine the vinegar, thyme, bay leaves, mustard seeds, honey, 1 tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. pepper with ¼ cup water. Bring to a boil, remove from the heat, and add the raisins. Let sit for 5 minutes. Slowly drizzle in the oil, while whisking until the mixture emulsifies. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Put the greens, apricots, walnuts, almonds, and sunflower seeds on a large platter. Toss with just enough of the dressing to coat lightly. Season to taste with salt and pepper and pass any remaining dressing at the table.

—Pete Evans; recipe adapted from *Moveable Feast with Fine Cooking*.





Willow Spring Ranch

Raising certified-organic lamb sustainably and humanely on about 1,700 acres of pasture in the foothills of the Bridger Mountains is what self-professed New York City expats Katy and Richard Harjes have been doing since 2008, after trading in their jobs as magazine photo editor and investments expert, respectively, for life on the ranch. They had always been connected to environmental issues and outdoor life through hiking, biking, skiing, and kayaking, and had been fixing up an old farmhouse in Belgrade (near Bozeman) for a few years. But they wanted the West to be a bigger part of their lives. Working the land seemed a natural extension, so they researched and studied farming options, reached out to experienced livestock farmers for advice, and learned the rules of organic certification. And they bought a flock of sheep.

Now, the flock has grown to more than 350 ewes and 20 rams, and there's a bunch of collies to herd and Maremmas (an Italian sheepdog breed) to guard the flock against predators. The two work sunup to sundown most days—even more at shearing and lambing time. Word of their organic operation quickly spread, and they can hardly keep up with the demand for their mild and tender meat, which is also sold by mail order. It's just the beginning, say Katy and Richard; their dream is to expand and help other young farmers make a go of their own operations. "It's an opportunity," says Katy, "to give something back and encourage a movement we believe in."

For more on Willow Spring, visit montanaorganiclamb.com.



Willow Spring Ranch owners Richard and Katy Harjes with Melissa, Pete, and Eduardo.



Melissa with fly-fishing guide and husband Garrett Blackburn.

else. The result was not one but two amazing Big Sky feasts. The first—for 50 guests—is at a ranch near Bozeman.

Teaming up with Garcia is chef Melissa Harrison. Her Ennis, Montana-based catering company, Seasonal Montana, brings farm-to-table pop-up dinners to fields and other assorted spots in the area, both wild and tame. "I'm an extreme outdoor person," says Harrison. "Adventure, cooking, and living outdoors are how I learned to live my life." She also hosts adventure trips with her husband, Garrett Blackburn, a master fly fisherman and guide. To keep the Madison River's trout population healthy, fishing is catch-and-release only, but rainbow trout farmed at local sustainable operations, like Trout Culture in Paradise, entice Harrison to grill whole fish with lemon and herbs for the crowd gathering at nearby Willow Spring Ranch, where Katy and Richard Harjes (see left) raise lambs on organic and native grasses, alfalfa, and clover.

"It's a thrill to gather wild edibles here," says Garcia, who foraged with Evans for stinging nettles, cattails, and berries to use in his dishes. Creator of the Montana Mex line of salsas and seasonings, Garcia displayed his mettle when he lost his left hand in 2011 after he was electrocuted in a freak accident while hiking. ➡



grilled herb-stuffed trout

This rustic classic is stuffed with an herb butter and lemon slices.

Serves 4

- 2 oz. (4 Tbs.) unsalted butter, softened**
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped**
- 3 Tbs. thinly sliced fresh chives**
- 3 Tbs. finely chopped fresh garlic scapes**
- 3 Tbs. finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley**
- 1 Tbs. chopped fresh thyme leaves**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 4 whole trout (8 to 9 oz. each), heads and tails left on, gutted, and boned**
- 2 lemons, 1 sliced and 1 cut into wedges**
- Olive oil, for serving**
- Pea shoots (optional), for serving**
- Edible flowers (optional; see p. 91), for serving**

Prepare a medium-high (400°F to 475°F) gas or charcoal grill fire.


Combine the butter, garlic, chives, scapes, parsley, thyme, $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. salt, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. pepper in a small bowl.

Season the trout inside and out with salt and pepper. Divide the butter among the fish, spreading it in the cavity. Arrange the lemon slices over the butter. Arrange the fish in a grill basket and grill, flipping once, until the flesh is opaque throughout and the skin is charred, 6 to 7 minutes total. Transfer the fish to a large platter, tent with foil, and let rest 5 minutes.

Top each fish with a drizzle of olive oil, and pea shoots and edible flowers, if using. Serve with the lemon wedges.

Note: If you can't find garlic scapes, you can substitute 9 blanching and minced garlic cloves.

—Melissa Harrison; recipe adapted from *Moveable Feast with Fine Cooking*

 **Pair With:** CRISP CHARDONNAY
Trout is relatively heavy for fish, so it can take a full-bodied white like Chardonnay. A crisp one will go best with the lemon and herbs.



But Garcia has long since mastered his high-tech prosthetic, earning him his nickname Bionic Chef, and a documentary, *Charged*, has just been released about his ordeal.

→ The setting for the second feast is Paws Up, a 37,000-acre ranch resort near Missoula. The resort's chef, Ben Jones, and chef Rory Schepisi, in for a visit from Texas, have fired up a chuck wagon spread on the banks of the roaring Blackfoot River. For the grilled beef tenderloin, Schepisi, whose latest restaurant, Republic, opens this year in Amarillo, Texas, went to the source: family-owned and run Sitz Ranch. "Ranchers come out at the break of dawn, make sure their cattle have ample grass, and move them from pasture to pasture," she says as she joins Jim and Tammi Sitz and their daughters on horseback to ride the range amid a herd of black Angus. "They're on duty 24/7, 365 days a year," says Schepisi. →

summer squash with jalapeño, herbs, and sesame seeds

This quick dish is bright and fresh. Experiment with different herbs and toasted seeds for topping. **Serves 6 to 8**

- | | |
|---|---|
| ½ tsp. finely grated lemon zest | 7 Tbs. avocado or olive oil; more for the grill |
| 3 Tbs. fresh lemon juice | 1½ lb. yellow squash (about 2 large), cut lengthwise into ¼-inch slices |
| 2 Tbs. granulated garlic | 1½ lb. zucchini (about 2 large), cut lengthwise into ¼-inch slices |
| 1 Tbs. minced pickled jalapeño slices | 1½ Tbs. toasted sesame seeds |
| ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro | |
| 1 tsp. chopped fresh oregano | |
| 1 tsp. chopped fresh thyme | |
| Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper | |

Prepare a medium-high (400°F to 475°F) gas or charcoal grill fire.

In a small bowl, combine the lemon zest and juice, garlic, jalapeño, cilantro, oregano, thyme, ¼ tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. pepper. Set aside.

Oil the grill grate. Brush the squash with the oil and season lightly with salt and pepper. Grill the squash, flipping once, until tender

and grill marks appear, about 9 minutes total.

Transfer the squash to a platter. Top with the lemon mixture, and garnish with the toasted sesame seeds. Serve warm or at room temperature.

—Eduardo Garcia; recipe adapted from *Moveable Feast with Fine Cooking*.

grilled beef tenderloin

This recipe is super simple, but it's packed with flavor from the pickled jalapeños and steak seasoning. **Serves 8**

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 cup soy sauce | 8 1½-inch-thick beef tenderloin steaks, preferably Certified Angus Beef |
| 2½ oz. sliced pickled jalapeños (about ¼ cup), plus 2½ Tbs. pickling juice | Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper |
| 1 Tbs. purchased or homemade steak seasoning, such as Montreal steak seasoning | 12 to 15 small basil leaves, fresh or fried, for garnish (optional) |

In a large shallow bowl, combine the soy sauce, jalapeños, pickling juice, and seasoning. Add the steaks, turn to coat, and marinate at room temperature for 30 minutes.


Meanwhile, prepare a medium-high (400°F to 475°F) gas or charcoal grill fire.

Grill the steaks with the grill closed, flipping once, until medium rare (130°F to 135°F), about 8 minutes total. Remove from grill, season lightly with salt and pepper, tent

lightly with foil, and let rest about 5 minutes.

Garnish with the basil leaves, if using.

—Rory Schepisi; recipe adapted from *Moveable Feast with Fine Cooking*.

 **Pair With:** CARMÉNÈRE Relatively lean beef tenderloin can work with a medium-bodied red, and Carménère can have green notes that will accent the jalapeño.



OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP: A covered wagon and open-pit fire set the scene for the feast at Paws Up Ranch. **CENTER:** Pete with chef Rory Schepisi, grilling dinner over the open flames.

THIS PAGE, TOP LEFT: Sliced grilled beef tenderloin and summer squash are on the menu. **TOP RIGHT:** Beekeeper Sam Wüstner, of Wüstner Brothers Honey in Missoula, at one of his hives.

CENTER, RIGHT: Sam shows chef Ben Jones and Pete how to extract honey from the hives. **RIGHT:** Rory talks with cattle ranchers Jim and Tammi Sitz at Sitz Ranch in Jackson.





ABOVE: Chef Ben Jones enjoys a moment before the grilling begins. **CENTER:** Guests taking their seats for the feast. **BELOW:** Paws Up bartender Sarah Boggs muddles herbs for some berry-infused cocktails.



huckleberry croustade

A combination of huckleberries and blackberries or raspberries makes a great filling for this dessert, but you can use any berries you have on hand—just be sure they're ripe and flavorful. Serves 6

FOR THE FILLING

- 1 lb. fresh or frozen huckleberries (about 3 cups)
- 8 oz. fresh or frozen blackberries or raspberries (about 1½ cups)
- 7 oz. (1 cup) confectioners' sugar
- 1 oz. (¼ cup) cornstarch, mixed with 3 Tbs. water
- 1½ tsp. finely grated lemon zest
- 1 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tbs. vanilla bean paste or pure vanilla extract

FOR THE DOUGH

- 6¾ oz. (1½ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp. granulated sugar
- ½ tsp. table salt
- 5½ oz. (11 Tbs.) unsalted butter, cold and cut into ½-inch cubes
- 1 large egg yolk
- 3 Tbs. whole milk
- 1 large egg, beaten with 1 Tbs. water
- 6 Tbs. sanding sugar, for finishing

MAKE THE FILLING

Combine the berries and confectioners' sugar in a medium heavy-duty pot over medium-low heat. Bring to a gentle boil, stirring frequently. Remove the pan from the heat and add the cornstarch mixture in a steady stream, stirring constantly. Return the pot to the heat and cook, stirring, until the berry mixture begins to thicken, then boil for 2 minutes to completely cook the cornstarch. Add the lemon zest and juice, and vanilla. Remove from the heat and let cool completely. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 6 hours (and up to 3 days). After chilling, the consistency of the mixture should resemble thick pie filling.

MAKE THE DOUGH

Combine the flour, granulated sugar, and salt in a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Add the butter and mix on low speed until the mixture looks sandy and there are no pieces of butter larger than a pea, about 2 minutes. Scrape down the side and bottom of the bowl

with a spatula. (If mixing by hand, use a pastry cutter or two forks to mix the butter into the flour.)

In a small bowl, combine the egg yolk and milk. With the mixer on low speed, add the yolk mixture to the flour mixture and mix just until the dough comes together, about 15 seconds; the dough will be somewhat soft and pliable. (If mixing by hand, add the yolk mixture to the flour and mix gently with a fork until the liquid is well distributed. The dough will still look crumbly and dry. Transfer the dough to a clean counter and work it with the heel of your hand, pushing and smearing it away from you, gathering it up with a bench scraper, and repeating until the dough comes together and is somewhat soft and pliable.)

Turn the dough onto a sheet of plastic wrap, shape it into a disk, wrap it in the plastic, and let rest in the refrigerator for at least 20 minutes before rolling it out.

TO MAKE THE PASTRIES

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat to 350°F. Line two rimmed baking sheets with parchment.

Remove the dough from the refrigerator; if the dough is very firm, let it sit at room temperature just until pliable enough to work with. Divide the dough evenly into 6 pieces and shape into balls. On a floured surface, roll each ball into a ¼-inch-thick round, about 5 inches across. (It's fine if the edges are a little ragged.)

Place 3 Tbs. of the fruit filling in the center of each dough round, leaving a ¾-inch border (reserve extra filling for another use). Fold the edge of the dough over the edge of the fruit filling, pleating the dough as you go to maintain the circular shape. Transfer to the baking sheets and refrigerate for 15 minutes.

Brush the egg mixture over the edges of each pastry. Sprinkle 2 tsp. of the sanding sugar over the top of each croustade.

Bake until the dough is golden brown, 25 to 30 minutes. Transfer the baking sheets to a rack to cool. Serve warm or at room temperature.

—Ben Jones; recipe adapted from *Moveable Feast with Fine Cooking*.



Rory, Pete, and Ben before the feast begins at Paws Up Ranch.

For Jones, who moved to Montana in 1994 after stints at top Chicago restaurants such as Tru and Charlie Trotter, the direct impact of being a chef in a small marketplace is what he enjoys. “You get to know the local growers personally, many at the Missoula Farm to Fork Market, and it leads to bigger and better things. You develop a sense of community in your backyard.” Elk and bison from Montrail Bison, about 30 miles away, are regularly on Jones’s menu, as are tart huckleberries that he, his wife, and three daughters pick wild. For the feast, Jones turns the berries into a rustic dessert croustade.

“I love the crust, the crisp, and the char that cooking over an open fire gives food,” say Jones. “It’s the real deal and why I love working outdoors.”

We’ve included some of our favorite recipes from both feasts on these pages. They are a salute to the region’s iconic ingredients. Harrison’s whole trout and Schepisi’s beef tenderloin are grilled with simple treatments. The essence of early summer can be tasted in Garcia’s grilled vegetables and a fragrant herb salad from Evans. And for dessert, Jones’s flaky croustade is an homage to wild berries. These preparations are beautifully unfussy, and just what you need to inspire a western-style dinner in your own backyard.

For more on these Montana chefs and ranchers, and more of their recipes, visit FineCooking.tv.