

And this week...

My son, who had been visiting for the holidays, left on Monday for his first visit to his girlfriend's parents. He and his girlfriend will be back tonight for a visit of a few days with me before returning to school, and another friend is visiting for a couple of days as well, so holiday cooking has been extended by a bit which is fun, especially after the manner in which I cooked for myself this past week.

It was a bit of a reeducation in solo dining after several weeks of cooking copious amounts of food for someone else. Since I had bits and bobs of various things overflowing in both fridge and freezer, I wanted to do a massive clear-out before filling the fridge anew with items to tempt the appetites of both my friend and my son's girlfriend, as well as making some of my son's favorites before sending him back to school for his second semester. I therefore decided to set myself the challenge of foregoing my weekly grocery shop for the week except for a gallon of milk for my morning coffee.

While rather excellent for the budget, my "fridge foraging" week seems to have basically consisted of using my cooking skills to come up with innumerable ways in which to use up as much of the two remaining heads of cabbage – both green and purple – and a myriad of solitary root vegetables as I could. Some recipes were a triumph and I have happily transcribed them for you, and some have been relegated to the far recesses of the lizard portion of my mind (where I file memories and meals that need to be forgotten as soon as possible.) Either way, let it be noted that cabbage regenerates nightly in the fridge and that, no matter

how much I have hacked away and used, the red cabbage keeps getting bigger. Though I am a long-time, card-carrying member of the cabbage fan club, part way through the week I vowed not to purchase any in the near future and immediately broke my promise myself by buying an enormous Napa cabbage so as to make the Spring rolls that my son requested. The curse of the Brassica continues into next week...

Interestingly, to me anyway, though I have enough cuts of meat in my freezer to make many a meal, I went near full-on vegetarian for this week of being back to cooking for myself – barring some chicken stock, an anchovy here and there and some bonito flakes for broth. Though I know that I will still on occasion crave a burger, roast chicken, or a juicy pork chop, maybe 2022 will be the year when I firmly set my flag in the veggie rather than reductarian foodie camp. Stranger things have happened, but there's bacon in the world...

Finally, as my labor of paragraphs (I always like a nice collective noun) draws to an end for this week, and before you happily pass on to the recipe recap, [here](#) is a nicely written essay on the contentment involved in cooking from The Guardian.

[Chili Crisp Oil](#)

[Kung Pao Cabbage](#)

[Roasted Root Vegetable Velouté](#)

[Sweet and Sour Stuffed Leeks](#)

["Temple" Root Vegetable Soup](#)