

### And this week...

During this morning's tour of the garden, I happened to notice that the sorrel has had one final growth spurt and made a mental note to make saumon à l'oseille this week. Despite the happy discovery of those tender baby leaves, it is definitely winter here now.

My neighbors have garishly decorated their houses for the holidays, especially one down the block which twinkles and blinks in all shades of green, red and blue until late into the night (the inhabitants of which I am sure will have an electricity bill that will make their eyes water at the end of the month.) The quality of light during the day has changed, to that strange light that emanates from a yellow-gray sun in a nearly white sky that portends cold weather, and a sunset beach walk means getting there at 4:20 because it is pitch black here at 4:28. The crows start cawing early in the afternoon, which doesn't make the view of leafless trees from my front window any less depressing, I hear the occasional hoo hoo of an owl at two am, and the air is crisp with -- at night -- a sharp smell that indicates that it could actually snow if Mother Nature really wanted it to.

Food-wise, I do believe that I am in harmony with the season. During the winter months, I always keep a bowl of clémentines on the coffee table and it was filled for the first time just a few days ago. I am thinking of Stollen and Panettone breakfasts, and Bourbon spiked eggnog, and wild boar and venison stews full of red wine, warm spices and root vegetables. Also, my mom's Russian teacakes, and

candy canes, latkes with sour cream, mulled wine, mince pies and my great-aunt Helen's pecan tassies. Since my son is coming home for Christmas, I am having an internal debate as to whether we will have goose or prime rib for our December 24th celebratory dinner and have been looking through the 8367 recipes saved on my computer for items with which to treat him during his time at home. I have an increasingly strong urge to buy oodles of assorted candied peel to construct a proper British Christmas cake, and perhaps stem ginger to get cracking with the making of a rich and aromatic gingerbread.

Some of the above -- not all -- will come to pass in the weeks to come. In the meantime, here are last week's recipes that were good enough to post:

[Pork Lacquered with Vietnamese Sour Caramel](#)

[Multigrain Bread](#)

[Kale and Radicchio Salad with Warm Bacon Dressing](#)

[Beef Borscht](#)

[Three Cup Chicken](#)