



The Madness of March

MARCH 2021. The pandemic. The kids had been out of school since September. It was no longer “fun.” They missed their birthday parties. They missed their friends. These drive-by waves weren’t working. Teachers were telling us that homework wasn’t being turned in. College-bound students weren’t allowed on campus. Everyone was on edge. Mad. Me too.

I decided to have a March Madness party. It had nothing to do with basketball, although that subject certainly came up. I set up tables six feet apart on my patio. It was cold. Really cold, but everyone bundled up and showed up. There was a sound that hadn’t been heard in a while: laughter. Lots of it. I made beef stew. Someone brought mounds of mashed potatoes and other kinds of potatoes, as well. The dishes were soft and hearty. The culinary magazines called it comfort food.

Once we were allowed to congregate, I continued this tradition. We ate inside at one long table, but we had comfort food. Then one year, when

I was trudging to the store for March Madness ingredients, I stopped dead in my tracks. Right on my path was a bright purple crocus! Miraculous that something so delicate could push its way up through the frozen earth. A glorious yellow variety was close by. I stared at them for a long time, and realized I missed color.

Comfort food is a misnomer. Who decided that we’d be “comfortable” after sitting down to a heavy, soft meal just because it was cold outside? Mostly it made me sluggish and lethargic. I discarded my comfort list and looked for something fresh and light. Something with some snap.

Both asparagus and rhubarb had just come into our local market. The asparagus was pencil-thin, the rhubarb pink and slim, rather than red. Both screamed “spring.” It was March, but the crocus announced spring was coming. I bought both, then headed to my stacks of cookbooks for inspiration.

This spring, I’ll continue the tradition. I settled on two recipes. Both vibrant and fresh, I think they’ll go over well. Comfort food, 2026. 



PHOTO: GIRMANTAS URBONAS

KATHY HARRISON is a Barrington Hills resident who teaches the fine art of cooking. For more information, call 847-381-4828.

49
Years



A Barrington favorite since 1976, we are known for our Chicago style thin crust pizza, homemade Italian Beef, homemade pasta sauces, 25 homemade wings sauces, and local beer, wine, and cocktails.

DINE IN | CARRYOUT | DELIVERY
101 W. Northwest Hwy., Barrington
847-381-6740

Order online at pizzafactorypizza.com

QUINTESSENTIAL
BARRINGTON®

ADVERTISE



May/June 2026

Home Improvement
Spas + Aesthetics
Weddings & Events
Summer Camp & Travel

847-381-3860
lisa@qbarrington.com
Read Online at QBarrington.com

Pork Tenderloin with Rhubarb, Pear, Honey, and Rosemary

INGREDIENTS:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 ½ pounds pork tenderloin at room temperature | 1 cup diced rhubarb (1/4 inch-dice) |
| Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper | 1 Bosc pear, diced (1/4 inch-dice) |
| 1 ½ T. olive oil | ½ cup wheat beer |
| 3 sprigs rosemary | ½ cup chicken or beef broth |
| 1 clove garlic, smashed | ½ T. light honey |
| | 1 T. butter |

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 275 degrees. Place an ovenproof sauté pan, just large enough to hold the pork, over medium-high heat. Season the pork with salt and pepper. Add the olive oil to the pan, and when it shimmers, add the pork. Brown on all sides. Remove from heat and tuck 2 rosemary sprigs underneath the meat. Transfer the pan to the oven and roast until a thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the pork registers 130 degrees, about 10-20 minutes.
2. Remove the pork from the oven to a platter and tent loosely with foil. Discard the rosemary. Place the pan over medium heat and add the garlic, rhubarb, pear, and remaining rosemary sprig. Sauté until the rhubarb begins to soften, about 5-7 minutes. Pour in the beer and broth and reduce by half, about 5-7 minutes. Stir in the honey and butter.
3. Press the sauce through a fine sieve set over a bowl. Slice the pork and nap with some of the sauce. Serve the rest of the sauce at the table. Serves 4.

Shaved Asparagus with Arugula and Parmesan

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ pound large or medium asparagus
- 2 T. freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 3 T. super good olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- 6 ounces baby arugula
- Chunk of Parmesan for shaving
- Sliced prosciutto (optional)



This version of Shaved Asparagus with Arugula and Parmesan salad includes the addition of radishes, peas, and cucumber.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Break off the tough ends of the asparagus. Use a mandoline, vegetable peeler, or sharp knife to slice the asparagus lengthwise into paper-thin ribbons.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together the lemon juice and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Place the asparagus ribbons in a shallow salad bowl. Season lightly with salt and pepper and coat with half the dressing. Add the arugula, tossing gently to distribute the asparagus. Drizzle with remaining dressing.
4. With a vegetable peeler, shave thin curls of Parmesan over the salad. Accompany with a platter of prosciutto. Serves 4-6.