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ROOTS^{TO}ROOFS

CONTENTS

Spring cleaning tips.....	4
Beautify your backyard.....	9
Reimagine your kitchen	12
Fun and fresh recipes.....	15
GREEN IDEAS	
Smart food storage tips.....	18





SPRING IS HERE!

Have you prepared your home and yard to welcome it?



Are you excited about the return of warmer weather? Now's a great time to do some spring-cleaning tasks around your home and yard to make the most of this season and avoid unpleasant surprises. Here's a quick checklist of things to inspect around your home.

AIR-CONDITIONER

Test your air conditioner to ensure it's in good working order and will keep you cool when a heatwave hits your area. Replace or clean the filters and evaporator coils by following the manufacturer's instructions. This will help optimize the efficiency of your appliance.

WINDOWS AND SCREENS

Check the state of your window screens and replace them if they've been damaged over winter. This will help you better regulate the temperature and humidity in your home on hot days. You should also make sure your windows open and close properly.

ATTIC AND CEILING

Look for signs of water damage to your attic or ceiling, including stains, peeling paint and mold. You should also check for signs of an animal infestation, such as nests, and take the necessary measures to remove them.

GARDENING EQUIPMENT

Sharpen the blades and check the oil levels in your lawn mower, chainsaw and hedge trimmer. Take inventory of your gardening tools and clean them as needed.

GUTTERS

Remove debris from your gutters and make sure that water is draining away from your home's foundation. You can also take this opportunity to ensure there aren't any cracks or leaks in your gutters that could compromise their efficiency.

BALCONY OR PATIO

Clean your deck thoroughly and secure any loose boards. Wood patios should be stained every one to three years. If it needs to be done this spring, sand the surface and apply your chosen stain.



OUTDOOR FAUCETS

Turn on your outdoor faucets to check if the cold weather damaged your pipes. You can do this by covering the spout with your thumb. If you can stop the flow, there may be a hidden leak.

FOUNDATION

Check for cracks in your home's foundation and seal fine and hairline ones with an appropriate product. Hire an expert to evaluate cracks that are more than a quarter to a half an inch wide.

ROOF

Examine your roof for any damage sustained over the winter, such as missing or broken shingles, pooling water and thinning or unevenly distributed gravel. Plan the necessary repairs accordingly.

VEGETATION

Collect broken branches and trim greenery that's grown too close to your home. Overgrown trees and bushes can damage your siding and give pests access to your home. Additionally, trim your perennials, especially if you forgot to do so last fall.

Roll up your sleeves or schedule an appointment with the maintenance professionals in your area to get ready to welcome spring!



3 springtime home improvement projects

Are you thinking about updating your home this spring? If so, these three projects are perfectly suited to the season.

UPGRADE THE LANDSCAPING

Spring is the perfect time to upgrade flower beds and walkways or even install a pool or hot tub. Your garden will have time to grow in and you'll be able to enjoy your new outdoor space all summer long.

REBUILD OR REFINISH THE DECK

If your deck has seen better days, this is the ideal time to repair or rebuild it. Consider expanding it to create zones for eating, cooking and relaxing.

REPLACE THE SIDING

If your siding took a beating over the winter, now's the right time to replace it. Choose a quality product and consider using a more modern color. Cool tones like grey, blue and green have been popular in recent years.

Spring is the best time of year to tackle most outdoor projects. Just be sure to get to them before the hotter weather arrives.

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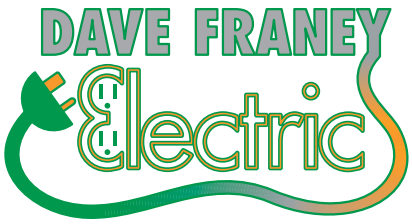
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SPRING CLEANING

Tips for sparkling clean walls and floors

Over a year, your walls and floors can accumulate a lot of dirt. When it's time for a good spring cleaning, use these tips to make them sparkle.

PAINTED WALLS Start by removing dust and cobwebs from your walls using your vacuum's brush attachment or a telescopic mop with a duster. Then, dampen a cloth with a mixture of warm water and mild soap and wipe down the walls, working from top to bottom. Rinse with clean water and allow to dry.

For stubborn dirt, use a stain remover specifically designed for painted walls. Be careful not to use the wrong product, as it could do more harm than good.

FLOORS Start by removing dust, crumbs and other debris from your floor. While a traditional broom works, vacuuming is a better choice. Next, clean the floors with a mixture of water and a dash of mild detergent that won't leave streaks. Be careful not to let the floors get too wet.

For best results, purchase a product specifically designed to clean your specific flooring, whether you have hardwood, bamboo, vinyl or ceramic.



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BYE-BYE, CLUTTER

Simple, effective storage solutions



Are you tired of having to tiptoe around piles of stuff in your home? Here are a few tips to help you organize and find a place for all your belongings so you can enjoy a clutter-free home:

Wardrobe organization systems. You can find various practical and affordable solutions for intelligently storing your clothing and accessories at local hardware and big-box stores, including hooks, shelves, shoe racks, bins and more. The possibilities are endless!



Multifunctional furniture for the living room. If you're in the market for a new coffee table, look for one with drawers and compartments that can be used to store items like the TV remote or video game controllers. Additionally, some ottomans double as hidden storage for things like magazines and throw blankets. Lastly, keep an eye out for sofa beds that come with drawers for extra storage.

Bathroom accessories. Store personal hygiene products, like toothbrushes, towels and washcloths in an organized and attractive way using trays with dividers, towel bars, shelves or shower caddies. If you're tight on space, don't hesitate to utilize the walls or even the top of the door to store items you use less frequently.

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BEAUTIFY YOUR BACKYARD

Gazebos add to summer pleasures

A gazebo isn’t only a simple decorative building; it’s a place of rest and relaxation that also serves as a refuge from rain in the middle of nature.

A souvenir of times gone by, when people lived at a slower tempo, the gazebo is the perfect place to relax, read a good book, write, listen to music, or simply enjoy a good meal with friends. Today, whether it serves as a relaxing spot in the shade, an outdoor living space or a dining place, the gazebo is an interesting addition to all landscaping arrangements. A refuge in the middle of nature, its shade and protection from the rain allows us to take full advantage of the great outdoors.

The gazebo also lends a romantic air to landscaping, and blends perfectly into the laid-back attitude of an English garden. Round or rectangular in shape, it harmonizes with every decor.

Whether you imagine it to be circular, square, or hexagonal, nothing is stopping you from creating the gazebo you’d love to have. Just head out to your closest book store or renovation center for some plans, and get out your saws and hammers!

A gazebo is relatively easy to build, as there are no walls involved, and straightforward plans and gazebo kits are readily available in stores. If you decide to go for a personalized design, your biggest challenge will be in cutting the framework to size. However you approach this project, you should always

check municipal building regulations before getting down to work. Once you have obtained a construction permit, prepare the ground with a layer of limestone gravel compacted with a roller.

There are many architectural styles to choose from, ranging from simple to extremely complicated. Four, six, or eight sides, closed or open: it all depends on what you will use it for. To guide you in your choice of style, remember that a gazebo can be enjoyed as much by the children as by their parents. You might want to make it big enough to include a play area, a place for family meals, or a relaxing corner for reading.

Think about adding trellises or mosquito screens on the sides, as well as double doors or an up-and-over opening to ensure that your gazebo is as user-friendly as possible. Landscaping around the gazebo is also an important element of this project. Once it is covered in vegetation, the gazebo will blend beautifully into your backyard.

While you’re there, why not also have electricity installed by an electrician? Working in the great outdoors will never be so easy and pleasant. ■

CONTINUED >>>



PATIO FURNITURE

5 criteria to make the right choice

Are you looking for the perfect patio set? To make the best choice for your needs, consider the following criteria when purchasing your furniture and accessories.

USE Determine how you'll use your patio set. For example, a comfortable armchair is a must if you want a spot to read and sunbathe, but you probably don't need a large table. Ensure your setup has some side tables, chests or ottomans where you can put down a book or glass.

COMFORT Don't hesitate to try out the chairs in the store. The presence or absence of armrests, the height of the chairs relative to the table, the number of possible adjustments and the depth of the seat are all characteristics that'll influence your comfort level.

AVAILABLE SPACE If your patio is small, choose chairs that can slide under the table or be folded or stacked. Multi-functional furniture, such as a storage bench or table with an extension leaf, is also a good choice.

QUALITY Choose high-quality pieces that can withstand the whims of Mother Nature. For instance, ensure the cushions are UV and mould resistant. Looking for a set with an umbrella? Ensure the base won't get carried away by the wind.

MATERIALS Wrought iron, aluminum, steel, wood, composite, synthetic rattan – the list goes on. Find out the advantages and disadvantages of each to make an informed decision. Weight, durability, style, maintenance, cost and weather resistance are just some of the factors to consider.



4 ways to liven up your backyard

Do you want to upgrade your backyard this summer? If so, here are a few ideas that may inspire you to transform your outdoor space into a family-friendly oasis.

INSTALL A PLAY STRUCTURE

Purchase and install a play structure for your kids to climb, swing and slide on. If you're a skilled DIYer, you can also build your own tire or rope swing. Just make sure everything's safe.

PUT IN A SWIMMING POOL

Both in-ground and above-ground pools are great for the whole family. They provide hours of fun for the kids, and adults can enjoy a refreshing dip or workout.

CREATE AN OUTDOOR THEATER

All you need is a TV or a projector and a large sheet to have a movie night under the stars. If you have a large backyard, you can add a few speakers to improve the sound quality. You can also lay out cushions and blankets to create a cozy atmosphere.

BUILD A TREEHOUSE

It doesn't need to be big or elaborate for your kids to enjoy having their own treehouse. Just make sure it's safe, stable and weatherproof.



DIY PROJECTS

Building a treehouse with your child: an exciting project

A beautiful wooden treehouse instantly adds whimsy and fun to your backyard. While you can purchase many pre-made models, most people will agree that nothing beats a treehouse built by your own hands.

AN ACTIVITY THAT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER

Instead of assembling a mass-produced treehouse in a few minutes, you can invest many hours with your child. You won't regret this opportunity to spend quality time together.

A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

You can make your treehouse look like a cozy cabin or a tiny replica of your home. No matter what style you decide to build, you can teach your child about tools, technology and the construction process. They'll also learn how to plan and execute a project, providing them with valuable life lessons.

A GREAT ENVIRONMENTAL OPTION

Your custom-built treehouse will easily outperform its commercial rivals if you choose the right materials. Whether you buy wood at a hardware store or gather it in a nearby forest, your treehouse will be unique and ecologically sustainable.

A PLEASURE TO REDISCOVER

If your child is usually glued to their video games, it may take some effort to convince them to get their hands dirty building a treehouse. You may be able to persuade them to participate by implementing screen-free days or rewarding them with small prizes for spending time outside.

Building a treehouse is a satisfying project that could turn into one of your child's fondest memories. To find the materials you need for your backyard project, visit the stores in your area.

REIMAGINE *your kitchen*

4 must-have features for the ultimate dream kitchen

Are you updating your kitchen? If so, here are four fabulous features you may want to consider installing.

POT FILLER

A pot filler is a swing-out faucet on a long, jointed arm that’s generally mounted over the stove. Pot fillers are extremely convenient and prevent you from having to lug heavy, water-filled pots from sink to stove.

FARMHOUSE SINK

With their white, fireclay basins and tall, stainless-steel faucets, modern farmhouse sinks aren’t only stylish; they’re also wider and deeper than standard kitchen sinks. This helps make cooking and cleaning a breeze.

DOUBLE OVEN

Double ovens provide extra cooking space, so you have the flexibility to whip up multiple dishes simultaneously. They’re especially convenient if you do a lot of entertaining.

BUILT-IN REFRIGERATOR

If you want your kitchen to have a streamlined and uniform profile, a built-in refrigerator is the way to go. Built-in refrigerators sit flush with the rest of the kitchen cabinetry in the space and offer an upmarket appearance.

If you’re designing your dream kitchen, keep in mind, you don’t have to do it alone. Consider reaching out to a home designer or general contractor in your area for help.



What to consider when replacing your cabinets

Are your kitchen cabinets 20 or 30 years old? Are they showing signs of deterioration? Replacing them is a significant project that requires careful planning. Here are a few things to consider for the best results.

CHOOSE A STYLE AND MATERIAL

Consult an interior designer to help you choose new cabinets that complement your home. They’ll create mock-ups using 3D design software to show you various cabinets that fit your space, style and budget.

Cabinet materials include medium density fiberboard (MDF), hardwood, melamine and acrylic. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. Browse several samples to find your preference. On top of how the material looks, consider how easy it is to clean and maintain.

Once you know which cabinets you want to buy, place your order and determine when you can have them installed, whether you’re hiring a professional or doing it yourself.

REMOVE THE OLD CABINETS

First, empty your old cabinets and remove them from the walls. To avoid injuring yourself, entrust this task to a professional. They’ll also dispose of unusable materials correctly.

INSTALL THE NEW CABINETS

Before installing your new kitchen cabinets, prepare the room. For example, clear and protect the floor, remove your appliances and disconnect the plumbing. Depending on the project’s complexity, you may need to find an alternative space to prepare your meals.

What type of countertop should you choose?

Laminate is affordable, easy to care for and shock resistant. However, it scratches easily and has very little heat resistance.

Wood is timeless and perfect for a warm, rustic look. It has little resistance to shocks, cuts, heat and water. It also absorbs food odors. It can be expensive and needs to be treated once a month.

Concrete is shock-, stain- and heat-resistant as well as easy to maintain. However, it may crack and it requires the regular application of a sealant.

Quartz gives a very elegant look, is easy to maintain and is resistant to scratches, heat and stains. It is rather expensive.

Granite is stylish and durable as well as scratch- and heat-resistant. It’s also easy to clean. It’s expensive and a sealant needs to be applied every year.

Marble is elegant and timeless. It’s resistant to water, heat and wear and is easy to care for. However, it’s expensive and susceptible to stains, and a sealant needs to be applied every six months.

Glass is elegant and trendy; it’s heat resistant and is suitable for all decors.

Corian is designed for strength and is appreciated for its antibacterial qualities.

3 UNIQUE COUNTERTOP MATERIALS

Wondering what options you have outside of laminate, quartz and granite? If you’re on the hunt for something unique, consider one of the following three options.

Soapstone. This natural stone will give your kitchen a rustic look, especially as it ages.



HOW TO REPLACE YOUR COUNTERTOP IN 3 STEPS

With the right tools, the average homeowner can install a new countertop over the weekend. Here’s how to do it in three easy steps.

Remove. Shut off your home’s water supply and disconnect the sink. Then, remove the old countertop.

Cut. Determine the dimensions of the new countertop. Allow an extra inch for islands and overhangs. Use a scribe to cut the sides that touch an uneven wall surface.

Install. Depending on the material of your countertop, you may need to apply a protective sealant and use special adhesives or screws. Ensure the countertop is secure and stable before re-connecting the plumbing and replacing the sink.

Look for a professional in your area if you’d rather leave this task to an expert.



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FUN + FRESH RECIPES

5 ideas for fresh and simple summer meals

If the weather is warm, you probably don't want to get stuck sweating over a stove for hours. Here are five ideas for easy meals the whole family will enjoy.

• **SALADS**
A salad can be an easy meal to prepare. To make each bite refreshing, opt for water-rich fruits and vegetables. Don't hesitate to experiment with the ingredients.

• **FISH**
Whether grilled, smoked or served raw, this light protein is ideally suited for summer meals. You can even add it to a couscous, quinoa or other type of salad.

• **TARTARE**
Made of beef, duck, salmon, trout or tuna, this luxurious dish can be quite filling. If you want to prepare it yourself, ask a butcher or fishmonger for advice about the best cuts to use.

• **TACOS**
Prepare a beef, chicken, fish or bean filling and let everyone build their own tacos. From peppers and onions to salsa and sour cream, there's no shortage of toppings.

• **POKE**
This dish combines marinated raw fish with fresh vegetables, nuts, seeds and a variety of other ingredients. For a protein-rich vegetarian alternative, swap the fish for tofu.

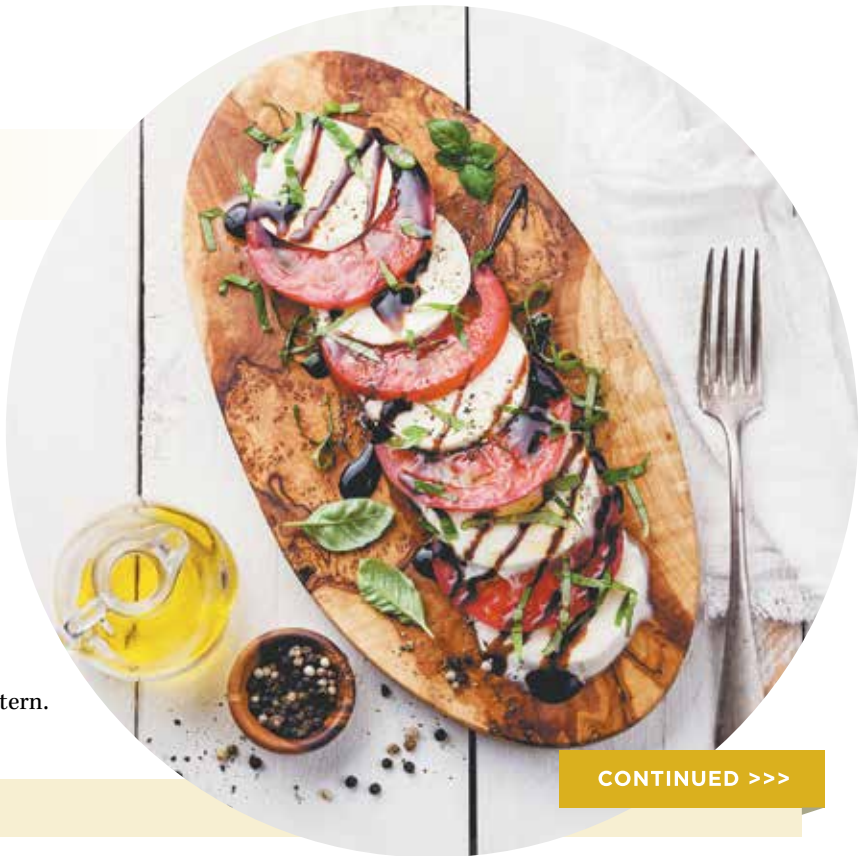
Caprese salad

Served as an appetizer or a side dish, this light Italian salad is perfect for any occasion.

Start to finish: 10 minutes • Servings: 2

- Ingredients**
- 1 large tomato, sliced
 - 9 ounces fresh mozzarella, sliced
 - About 10 basil leaves, coarsely chopped
 - 1/4 cup olive oil
 - 1/4 cup cream of balsamic
 - Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions
On a serving plate, place the tomato and mozzarella slices so that they alternate and slightly overlap. Sprinkle with chopped basil leaves. Drizzle the olive oil and cream of balsamic in a zigzag pattern. Season with salt and pepper.



CONTINUED >>>

FUN + FRESH
RECIPES

Salmon
poke bowl



You might not be able to visit Hawaii any time soon, but this healthy seafood dish will transport your taste buds to the Pacific islands.

Start to finish: 30 minutes
(30 minutes active) • Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 4 cups calrose rice, cooked and cooled
- 1 carrot, grated or julienned
- 1/2 cucumber, sliced
- A few leaves of green leaf lettuce
- 1/2 cup whole almonds
- 14 ounces fresh salmon, cubed
- 2 ripe avocados
- 1 tablespoon white sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon black sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon dried chili flakes
- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 tablespoon mirin

Directions

1. In 4 serving bowls, arrange the rice, carrot, cucumber, lettuce, almonds and salmon in separate piles. Set aside in the fridge.
2. Cut the avocados in half lengthwise. Gently remove the pit and skin. Place one of the halves face down on a cutting board. Cut thin slices widthwise, while maintaining the avocado's shape. Use your hands to gently fan out the slices sideways until they form a straight line (the slices should still overlap). Take one end of the line and curl it inward until the avocado takes the shape of a swirl or flower. Repeat this process with the 3 other halves.
3. Gently place an avocado flower in the center of each bowl. Sprinkle a quarter of the white and black sesame seeds and chili flakes over each bowl.
4. In another bowl, combine the soy sauce, orange juice, lime juice and mirin. Drizzle a quarter of the sauce over each poke bowl, or serve separately so everyone can add the amount they want.

Watermelon + grapefruit mocktail



This non-alcoholic beverage is the perfect drink to sip by a pool or barbecue.

Start to finish: 5 minutes (5 minutes active) • Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 2 cups watermelon, seeded and cubed
- 1 cup pink grapefruit juice
- 4 tablespoons simple syrup
- Grapefruit-flavored sparkling water
- 8 lime slices
- 4 sprigs fresh rosemary

Directions

1. In a small bowl, mash 1 cup of watermelon cubes with a muddler or fork until they have a coarse texture. Divide the purée between 4 tall glasses.
2. Add 1/4 of the grapefruit juice and 1 tablespoon of simple syrup to each glass. Mix with a spoon.
3. Fill each glass with the grapefruit-flavored sparkling water. Divide the remaining watermelon cubes between each glass. Garnish with lime slices and a sprig of rosemary.

Tomato and watermelon salad

Are you looking for a refreshing appetizer to serve on a hot day? If so, this sweet and juicy salad is sure to delight your taste buds.

Start to finish: 20 minutes (20 minutes active)
Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 4 small Italian tomatoes, quartered
- 2 cups yellow cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 cups watermelon, seeded and diced
- 1 cup red onion, minced
- 1 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 cup arugula
- 1/2 cup fresh mint leaves
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of one lemon
- 1/2 cup cream of balsamic
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions

1. In a large mixing bowl, toss the tomatoes, watermelon, red onion, feta, arugula and mint. Divide the salad equally among 4 bowls.
2. Drizzle each salad with a quarter of the olive oil, lemon juice and cream of balsamic. Season with salt and pepper to taste, and serve immediately.



Caipirinha

One sip of this sweet Brazilian cocktail will make you think you're on a beach in Rio de Janeiro. Cheers!

Start to finish: 5 minutes
(5 minutes active)
Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 4 juicy limes, quartered into wedges
- 6 tablespoons sugar or brown sugar
- 8 ounces cachaça
- 1/2 cup lime juice
- 1 lime, sliced into rounds
- Mint leaves (optional)
- Sliced star fruit (optional)

Directions

1. Divide the lime wedges into 4 small glasses. Add 1-1/2 tablespoons of sugar to each glass. Mash with a muddler until you get as much juice out of the lime as possible.
2. Add 2 ounces of cachaça and 1/4 of the lime juice to each glass. Stir well with a spoon.
3. Garnish each glass with a slice of lime. If desired, garnish with mint leaves and star fruit slices as well.



Cachaça is a distilled spirit made from fermented sugarcane juice that's commonly used for cocktails in Brazil.

Fresh spring rolls

These homemade spring rolls are so delicious, you'll want to make them for every occasion this summer.

Start to finish: 1 hour (45 minutes active)
Servings: 4 rolls

Ingredients

- 4 sheets rice paper
- 8 mint leaves
- 4 iceberg lettuce leaves
- 1/2 cup cilantro
- 1/2 cup basil leaves
- 1 cup rice vermicelli, cooked and cooled
- 1/2 cup carrots, peeled and julienned
- 1/2 cup cucumbers, julienned
- 8 shrimp, cooked and peeled
- 1 cup ponzu sauce
- 1 cup fish sauce
- 1 lime, quartered

Directions

1. Fill a large bowl with warm water. Soak 1 sheet of rice paper in the water for about 20 seconds, or until it's soft. Place the sheet on a clean work surface.
2. Layer the following ingredients on the sheet, in this order: 2 mint leaves, 1 lettuce leaf, 1/4 of the cilantro, basil, rice vermicelli, carrots and cucumbers, and 2 shrimp.
3. Gently fold the lower edge of the rice paper over the filling, and roll it upward until the filling is completely wrapped. Make sure to gently squeeze the ingredients together, and fold in the sides of the rice paper when it's wrapped halfway.
4. Repeat steps 1 to 3 for the remaining rolls. Refrigerate the rolls for 15 minutes before serving them with ponzu and fish sauce. Garnish with lime wedges.



This recipe is versatile and can be adapted to almost any taste. Replace the shrimp with grilled chicken or tofu, for example. If you want to add more veggies, consider including slices of red pepper or purple cabbage.

GREEN IDEAS

FIGHT FOOD WASTE

Smart food storage tips

Did you know that around one-third of all food produced worldwide is wasted? If you want to avoid becoming part of the problem and stop throwing away expired food, adopt these healthy habits.

CITRUS FRUITS

Keep them in the fridge to prolong their freshness. You can also place them in a bowl of water in the fridge to keep them delicious for a month or two.

BANANAS

Store them on the counter or in the pantry. Put them in the fridge as soon as they're ripe. Even if their skins turn brown from the cold, their flesh will be just right. Are your bananas overripe? Freeze them so you can add them to muffins, smoothies and more.

LETTUCE

Store it in the fridge in its original packaging or a non-airtight bag, wrapped in a damp cloth. Is it slightly wilted? Don't panic! Soak it in a container of cold water in the fridge to become crisp again.

BREAD

Store sliced bread in the pantry and eat it within two to five days for a softer texture and better taste. You can also freeze your bread and toast or defrost the slices you need as you go.

Finally, get creative when it comes to using your leftovers and extras. For example, you can make breadcrumbs from dry bread or prepare soup stock from vegetable peelings.

4 good habits to adopt with your organic waste bin



Collecting organics allows you to give your food waste a second life. Here are a few things you can do to ensure your organics bin is properly managed.

Place organic waste directly in the bin

You can use a paper bag to transport your organic waste from the kitchen to the bin. However, avoid placing waste in oxo-degradable or biodegradable bags, as they're not compostable.

Put the bin out for collection every week

Empty your bin regularly to help limit odors, even if it's not completely full. Occasionally cleaning the bin with water, vinegar and baking soda can help eliminate nasty smells.

Add liquid-absorbing materials

Don't put excess liquids like juice or soup in the bin. You can place dead leaves, newspaper, tissues or paper towels in the bottom of the bin to help absorb liquids. You can also alternate with table scraps.

Keep pests at bay

In the kitchen, cut a cork lengthwise and place it on top of your small organics bin to keep fruit flies away. Outside, apply menthol ointment to the edges of the lid and around the air holes of the bin to repel animals.



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