

June 2021

FOOD FOR THOUGHT— The “Bee’s Knee’s” of the farmers market—HONEY! It’s a sweet that actually serves more of a purpose than just being “sweet tasty treat.” Not only is honey delicious, but it is important because bees are pollinators and they have a vital role in the production of our fruits, nuts, seeds & vegetables.

The bee population is on the decline because of pollution, pesticides, bee specific disease & loss or change to the habitat where bees draw their nectar. That’s why it is important to select honey from local, sustainable beekeepers whenever possible...such as your local farmers market!

Honey has been used for thousands of years as food & medicine (they even found honey in King Tut’s tomb that was still edible). A few highlights about honey:

- **Amino acids**, which are essential for healing and repair
- **B vitamins**, which offer us energy
- **Minerals** such as calcium, copper, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, and zinc
- **Vitamin C**, a potent antioxidant, as well as additional antioxidants that protect our cells from damage
- Honey has an **indefinite shelf-life** when stored properly (hence King Tut’s findings)
- **Antibacterial and antimicrobial properties** that aid wound healing
- **Anti-inflammatory compounds** that inhibit the pathways that lead to inflammation
- **Anti-viral activity** that can prevent the growth of viruses and support the immune system
- **Reducing asthma** symptoms
- **Inhibiting** fungal growth
- The nutritional profile of honey has **hypoglycemic effects** that can be beneficial to diabetic patients

And here is a great recipe for the grill using “Honey” in a savory fashion and it makes a great dressing for other dishes as well:

This Month's Recipe:
HONEY GLAZED VEGGIE SANDWICH

(Serves 4)

Dressing

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons local honey
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- Juice of 1 lemon or ¼ cup lemon
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon sea salt

Other Ingredients:

- 2 zucchini or yellow squash, sliced lengthwise
- 2 bell peppers, quartered
- 1 loaf ciabatta bread, halved lengthwise (maybe some from local farmers market)
- 4 slices sharp provolone cheese
- 8 ounces burrata cheese or mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup baby spinach
- ¼ cup fresh basil or mixed herbs, like parsley & cilantro

Directions:

To make the dressing, combine all ingredients in a glass jar and use emulsion hand blender or whisk until smooth. Taste and adjust the salt, if necessary.

In a large bowl, toss the zucchini and peppers with ½ of the dressing. Let sit 10 minutes. Preheat the grill or grill pan to high.

Rub each half of the bread with olive oil. Grill the bread, cut side down, for 3-5 minutes or until light grill marks appear. At the same time, grill the peppers and zucchini until softened, 3-4 minutes per side. Remove everything from the grill.

Working with the bottom piece of bread, drizzle with a couple spoonful's of the dressing, then layer on the vegetables, burrata, and provolone. Add the spinach and herbs. Drizzle the remaining dressing over everything. Add the top half of the ciabatta and gently push down on the sandwich. At this point, you can slice the sandwich and serve warm or wrap the sandwich tightly and place in the fridge for 1 hour or up to 1 day. Before serving, cut into 4-6 sandwiches.

No bread/carbs, no problem! Just make veggies as directed, drizzle with dressing and top with cheeses and toast until cheese is melted! YUM!

Adapted from Half Baked Harvest

