

Bursts of Color at the Beach

All eyes to the sky during kite festival

Story and Photos by Tracy Beard

Long Beach, Washington, a popular summertime playground, comes alive with color the third week of August each year. This year, August 20–26, the sky will open up to a magnificent display of color. Children, adults, novices and professionals from all over the world arrive, ready to showcase their extravagant kites and demonstrate their expert navigational techniques. Whether you are a participant or an observer, the Washington State International Kite Festival is an exciting way to spend a few days at the beach.

Most children find kites fascinating and fun. As a child, I assembled a few kites, and my dad laboriously taught me how to make them fly. The pursuit required a kite with string and a tail, some technique, a little wind, wide-open space, a great deal of patience and a lot of energy to run. I distinctly remember that patience was not my strong suit, and I would get very frustrated running while trying to get the kite to quit bouncing along the ground and to get it up into the air. My father, on the other hand, was quite adept at the procedure.

How difficult can it be?

Instructions for flying a kite do not seem all that difficult — simply hold the kite up by the bridle point and let out the string or line. The kite, theoretically, should go right up once it catches the wind. Let the kite fly away a bit, then pull in on the line so that the kite points upward and begins to climb. Continue until the kite is at the altitude you desire. The only rule is that if your kite weighs more than five pounds you must keep it less than 500 feet above the ground. My kites never ventured that far, so there was no chance I would break that law.



Last year, my husband, Steve, and I attended one day of the Washington State International Kite Festival. The kites were astounding. I did not see anyone attempting to fly one of the thin paper kites with the fragile wooden twigs or plastic sticks that used to hold mine together. Everyone at the beach sported substantial models made with cloth or mylar and strong plastic or wooden frames. We watched gloriously-colored dragons, turtles, fish, and whales sail through the sky.

My favorite kite was Nemo, the clown fish from the children's movie, and my second was a colorful octopus with eight arms squirming wildly in the air. Each kite was sailing as if it had no cares, and the people steering them seemed completely at ease with their faces broadcasting huge smiles. Kite flying looked as though it had changed a great deal from my days of struggling to get the wild beast aloft.

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Tracy Beard's freelance writing and photography have been published in many regional, national, and international magazines.



Her stories focus on luxury and adventure travel, outdoor activities, spas, fine dining, and traditional and trendy libations. Formerly of Longview, she now lives in Vancouver, Wash.

VISITOR CENTERS

**FREE Maps • Brochures
Directions • Information**

- **Kelso-Longview Chamber of Commerce Kelso Visitor Center** I-5 Exit 39
105 Minor Road, Kelso • 360-577-8058
- **Woodland Tourist Center** I-5 Exit 21
Park & Ride lot, 900 Goerig St., 360-225-9552
- **Wahkiakum Chamber** 102 Main St, Cathlamet • 360-795-9996
- **Castle Rock Visitor Center** Exit 49, west side of I-5, 890 Huntington Ave. N. Open 10–2.
- **Naselle, WA Appelo Archives Center**
1056 SR 4, Naselle, WA. 360-484-7103.
- **Pacific County Museum & Visitor Center**
Hwy 101, South Bend, WA 360-875-5224
- **Long Beach Peninsula Visitors Bureau**
3914 Pacific Way (corner Hwy 101/Hwy 103)
Long Beach, WA. 360-642-2400 • 800-451-2542
- **South Columbia County Chamber** Columbia Blvd/Hwy 30, St. Helens, OR • 503-397-0685
- **Seaside, OR** 989 Broadway, 503-738-3097; 888-306-2326
- **Astoria-Warrenton Chamber/Ore Welcome Ctr**
111 W. Marine Dr., Astoria 503-325-6311 or 800-875-6807

Local information
Points of Interest
Recreation
Special Events
Dining ~ Lodging
Arts & Entertainment

Map suggests only approximate positions and relative distances. Consult a real map for more precise details. We are not cartographers.

Kite Festival *cont from page 19*

Activities abound during this week-long festival. Monday begins with a kite-train workshop and contest. The \$5 workshop teaches attendees how to make a kite train with three dazzling colored kites. Tuesday features several flying contests and a kite photography class. Wednesday is the main day for kids and senior competitions, and on Thursday, the handcrafted kites contest takes place. Sport kite events are on Friday and Saturday, and fireworks light up the sky on Friday night. On Sunday, the Moves to Music event takes place with competitors cajoling their kites into dancing to the tunes.

Throughout the week vendors will sell kite paraphernalia and food and drinks while spectators wander the beaches, mesmerized by the colorful skyline. Join the fun and spend a day or longer at Long Beach amidst the fun of the Washington International Kite Festival.

If you prefer to bring your own food to the beach, try making my ratatouille and roasted garlic and olive focaccia points. I created this dish while visiting the Mediterranean Sea this summer, and it is delicious hot, cold or at room temperature.



All eyes are on the sky at Long Beach during the International Kite Festival, set this year for Aug. 20-26.

Photo by Rick White



PROVISIONS

ALONG THE TRAIL OR OUT AND ABOUT

By Tracy Beard



Roasted Garlic and Olive Focaccia Bread

Roasted Garlic

Place 1/4 cup of whole garlic cloves in a small oven-proof container and cover with olive oil. Roast at 350° for 30-40 minutes until golden brown and soft. Chop each clove into 3 or 4 pieces.

For the Bread

2 cups warm (100°) water
1 heaping teaspoon active dry yeast
4 to 4-1/2 cups bread flour
2-1/2 teaspoons kosher salt or 1-1/2 teaspoons table salt
1/2 cup Kalamata olives, chopped
1/4 cup roasted garlic, chopped
Extra virgin olive oil

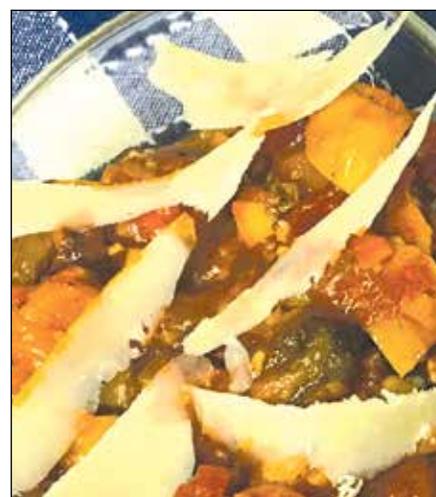
Put warm water in a mixing bowl and sprinkle the yeast over the top. After 3-5 minutes stir in 2 cups of flour. Stir approximately 100 times until smooth, cover with plastic wrap and leave in a warm place for 1 hour (this is the sponge).

Sprinkle salt over the sponge and stir in 1/4 cup olive oil. Add 1-1/2 cups more flour. Stir. Turn dough out onto floured surface. Add flour until you

have a smooth, cohesive and slightly sticky ball. Rub a large bowl with oil and place dough ball inside. Turn the ball over to coat with oil. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise 1 hour.

Punch down dough. Press down into a 12 x 17 rectangular cookie sheet making the thickness as even as possible. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise 2 hours.

Preheat oven to 400°. Dimple all over the top of the bread with your fingertip making indentations. Brush or drizzle the surface with 3 tablespoons olive oil and top with chopped roasted garlic and olives. Dust with a light sprinkling of coarse kosher salt. Bake on the upper rack for 20 minutes, rotating the pan halfway through baking. Let cool and then cut into strips.



Tracy's Ratatouille

3/4 cup olive oil
2 ripe tomatoes
1 small onion
2 tablespoons garlic
1 teaspoon capers
1 14-ounce can artichoke hearts
1-1/2 cups Prego original spaghetti sauce
1 teaspoon sugar
Salt and pepper to taste
1/3 cup Kalamata olives - chopped
1 small globe eggplant or 2 Japanese eggplants - peeled and chopped
2 small-to medium-sized zucchini, chopped
1/4 cup shaved Parmesan cheese

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in a frying pan and add onion and a touch of salt. Cook until translucent and add chopped tomato and garlic. Cook until tomatoes break down. Add Prego, sugar, salt and pepper to taste. Let simmer on low.

In another frying pan add 6 tablespoons olive oil and sauté eggplant until tender, set aside. Add 3 tablespoons oil to the eggplant pan and sauté zucchini until tender. Place eggplant back into the pan with the zucchini. Add artichoke hearts, capers, and olives. Combine ingredients with tomato sauce. Let simmer on low until rich and thick and then place in the refrigerator. This dish is best the next day.

Top with Parmesan cheese to serve. Use as a hot dip, cold or at room-temperature with focaccia toast points or French bread or put on crostini or eat it over hot pasta.