

RELISH THE RADISH

by Amber Gibson

Spicily, crunchy and refreshing, these radishes are most commonly seen on crudité platters. But there are so many flavors to be coaxed out of this crisp and flavorful root vegetable, and these chefs are exploring the possibilities.

- * Thinly shaved strips of daikon replace fettuccine noodles at Chicago's Ada Street. Zoë Schor shaves daikon with a vegetable peeler, then stores the long slices in ice water to keep them fresh with a nice bite. Schor then warms the radish on the stovetop for 30 seconds, gently tossing the "noodles" in a saffron coconut milk curry sauce before serving them with mussels.
- * At Quiescence in Phoenix, Dustin Christofolo uses crisp slices of watermelon radish as a vibrant platter on which to serve hamachi crudo bites, with a simple olive oil, salt and pepper marinade acting as a flavorful dressing.
- * Pickled radish slaw enhances the mild flavor of grilled ahi tuna at Magnolias in Charleston. Kelly Franz makes slaw from watermelon, black and red radishes with arugula, red cabbage, rainbow carrots and agave lime *coulis*. The spice notes from the tuna's peppercorn crust cut some of the acidity in the pickled slaw and the firm radish texture complements the meaty tuna.
- * At The Lodge at Glendorn in Bradford, Penn., Joseph Schafer serves French breakfast radishes cold and raw with cultured Vermont butter and sea salt. Schafer vacuum-packs and freezes the radishes to preserve their vibrant color and give them a denatured texture, as if they've been cooked.
- * Gerard Craft peels then fries small radishes before serving them on garlic toast bruschetta at Pastaria in St. Louis. Craft says icicle radishes work well—the spicier the better, since the flavor is muted after cooking.