



Wild ingredients such as sea strawberries are crucial to chef Rodolfo Guzmán's vision of Chilean cuisine.



Sweet Succulents

Salty sea strawberries were one chef's gateway to foraging on the Chilean coast

BY RODOLFO GUZMÁN

FORAGING FOR NATIVE PLANTS has been a practice of Chile's indigenous people for centuries. As part Mapuche, one of Chile's native groups, I try to bring those same influences to the menu at Boragó, my restaurant in Santiago. Some of the most interesting specimens are found along the country's 2,600 miles of coastline.

More than a decade ago, I went foraging along the shore outside Valdivia with a Mapuche man named Don Pascual, a prominent leader in the community. As we walked, he pointed at a plant carpeting the rocks and told me, "You have to taste this one." Once their peels are pulled back, sea strawberries, ground-covering succulents with a gushy center, smell and taste exactly like soft, juicy strawberries—but with the brininess of seaweed. They opened my mind to the foods

that could be found even just along this coast.

Sea strawberries are in season for just a few weeks of the Chilean summer, so my crew and I will harvest up to 150 pounds in a day. We ferment some, which intensifies their floral flavors. We extract their juices. We've served them raw as a dessert with almond-milk "snow." I've found other varieties similar to them around the world, but Chile's are by far the largest and most delicious.

As a forager, I love to see and learn things I never would as just a cook. It's like being a painter who is happy to paint with just 25 colors, when suddenly there are 300 colors in front of you. I feel like I get to bring new knowledge to this old tradition and help it to evolve. The sea strawberries just opened the door. ■



Where There's Smoke

A Scottish fishing village's tradition endures

BY KAREN GARDINER

The village of Auchmithie, on Scotland's northeast coast, was once home to hundreds of fisherfolk. The women of the town were renowned for their strength, and carried the men on their backs down to the boats so they could begin their journey with dry feet. It was the women too who preserved the haddock the men brought back, creating what would become known as the Arbroath Smokie.

The smoking technique they used continues to be practiced by about a dozen producers, including Iain R. Spink, a fifth-generation maker. He hangs salted fish over a fire in the bottom half of a whiskey barrel, then covers them with wet jute sacks to create a humid fire. Forty minutes later, the skin is crisp and bronze, and the smoky taste gives way to a creamy, sweet flesh.

Spink's smokies are available online (\$11 for two fish; arbroathsmokies.net)—he recommends trying them in fish cakes or soups, or on toast for breakfast. But it will take a visit to Scotland to have them at their very best: straight out of the fire.