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Taking Stock

Gourmet living in the Golden State begins with the feel-good flavors behind those pantry doors **BY ANDREA STANFORD**

Storage tip: Place little-used vessels above and everyday goods right up front.



Pamela Salzman loves a bustling kitchen. “I want it to be the most active part of the home—a place where people are actually preparing meals and gathering to share them,” says the nutrition and cooking instructor. When not leading in-demand classes (attended by the likes of L.A. designer Jenni Kayne and actress Kristen Bell), she consults one-on-one with her high-profile clients. For Beverly Hills manses and Aspen chalets alike, she customizes pantries and



FROM LEFT Pamela Salzman at the Beverly Hills home of a client. Pantry closet. Keeping healthy snacks within reach.

cupboards as part of a primary mission to make cooking with organic, locally grown, and whole, natural foods easy. “It all starts with a well-stocked and perfectly planned pantry,” she quips from her own bright kitchen in Manhattan Beach as she plates a salad of dandelion greens and quinoa that she garnishes with herbs from her vegetable garden. (Indeed, Alice Waters and Michael Pollan count among the strongest influences on her food philosophy.) “It’s the foundation for more healthful cooking,” she says. “With the right items, you won’t have to rely on convenience foods.” Here, Salzman dishes some tips for getting started:

LIKE WITH LIKE A pantry consists of categories: Whole grains, flours, legumes, fats/oils, sweeteners and baking essentials, nuts and miscellany, produce, and, of course, snacks. Salzman prefers to work in groupings (for example, keeping baking items together), though she advises perishables which spoil (think olive oils, nuts, potatoes) be placed in a cool, dark spot. Store all whole grain flours (e.g. whole spelt, whole wheat), and gluten-free flours (e.g. almond, buckwheat, coconut) airtight in the refrigerator as well.

Sublime Storage

Bye bye, plastic. Here, Salzman’s picks for effortless organization

FROM LEFT Waterworks Rattan Family Basket with Handles in chestnut, \$150–\$240, Palm Medium Rectangle Basket with Handles in black, \$60, and Palm Large Rectangle Basket in pine, \$130; waterworks.com. Weck 160mL jars, \$2.75/each, Heath Ceramics Sausalito, S.F., L.A.; heathceramics.com. Lorina lemonade, \$5, Whole Foods Market.



AU COURANT TASTES



1. Rancho Gordo heirloom beans, \$5.50, ranchogordo.com.
2. Pasolivo lime olive oil (for drizzling), \$25/375mL, select We Olive stores.
3. Askinosie 70% chocolate, \$8, askinosie.com.
4. St. Helena Olive Oil Co. Hornberger Estate olive oil, \$42/375mL, St. Helena Olive Oil Co., Napa.
5. Eden Kombu (for bean-cooking), \$7, edenfoods.com.
6. Noble Tonic 01 bourbon-matured maple syrup, \$25, mikuniwildharvest.com.
7. The Chia Co. chia seed shots, \$7.19/10, select Whole Foods Market stores.

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CONTAIN YOURSELF “Glass looks great and shows off the contents—and it also doesn’t affect taste,” praises Salzman. “I love the retro Weck glass jars available at Heath Ceramics, canisters with metal lids, and Lorina lemonade bottles—with the labels removed—which make stylish storage for oils and liquids.”

She also favors lined wicker baskets, in various sizes, for non-refrigerated foods such as produce and stray-grain items (brown rice, for one).

ROUND UP For produce or artisanal goods from pickled sauerkraut and strawberry preserves to orchard pecans and dried persimmons, look no further than your local farmers’ market. California boasts more of these than any other state. “My favorites are Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, Torrance, Santa Monica, Melrose Place and Beverly Hills,” says Salzman, whose shopping rounds also include her neighborhood specialty foods and grocer, Grow. Additionally, Salzman orders online at health-conscious sites such as Vitalchoice.com (for fish) and Mercola.com (for miscellany).

Additionally, scattered throughout the state are well-established co-op stores and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) venues, although she notes how CSAs can be tricky for the less confident cook: The weekly package selections, offered at a flat rate, are usually a surprise. “You need a solid meal repertoire to handle a crate of lemongrass or a bundle of beets,” she explains.

SO NOW WHAT? Never fear; Salzman’s cache of online recipes and grocery checklists are ongoing tools. With ingredients organized at one’s fingertips, pulling together a meal at a moment’s notice just became less of a stress. pamelasalzman.com. •

What’s in Store

California boasts world-class markets and boutiques to source just about anything

NICHE BOULETTE’S LARDER, S.F.; bouletteslarder.com. **NATURAL EREWHON**, L.A.; erewhonmarket.com. **WARES HEATH CERAMICS**, Sausalito, S.F., L.A.; heathceramics.com. **MOLECULAR LE SANCTUAIRE**, S.F.; le-sanctuaire.com. **VINTAGE POT + PANTRY**, S.F.; potandpantry.com. **RAW RAWESOME FOODS**, Venice, 310-452-2244. **ONE-STOP ROCKRIDGE MARKET HALL**, Oakland; rockridgemarkethall.com. **PROFESSIONAL SURFAS**, L.A.; culinarydistrict.com. **GADGETRY WILLIAMS-SONOMA**, stores throughout CA; williams-sonoma.com.

