

Autumn Salad with Grapes, Celery, Blue Cheese & Candied Pepitas

From the blog For Love of the Table

2 oz. stemmed baby spinach
4 oz. trimmed Little Gem (see notes) lettuce, cut crosswise in 1-inch strips, or torn into bite-sized pieces
1 1/2 oz. cored Radicchio, cut crosswise in 1/2-inch strips, or torn into bite-sized pieces
2/3 lb. red grapes, halved (about 2 cups)
4 oz. trimmed celery, sliced thinly (1/8-inch) on a slight diagonal (about 1 cup)
3 1/2 oz. Gorgonzola Piccante, Roquefort, or other crumbly, sharp blue
Salt & freshly ground pepper
1/2 c. *Cider-Honey Vinaigrette*
1/3 c. *Candied Pepitas*

Place the first 5 ingredients in a large bowl. Add half to three quarters of the blue cheese. Season with salt and pepper. Drizzle in 1/4 to 1/3 cup of the vinaigrette and toss well. Mound the salad on a large platter or on individual plates. Crumble the remaining blue cheese over. Drizzle with more vinaigrette, if you like. Scatter the pepitas over all.

Makes 4 large salads or 6 to 8 side salads.

Note: Little Gem lettuce is a cross between Romaine and Bibb. It has more crunch than Bibb...and is more tender than Romaine. If you are not able to find it, you may use Artisan Romaine Hearts, or plain Romaine hearts.

Cider-Honey Vinaigrette:

1/4 c. (60 g.) apple cider vinegar
2 T. (42 g.) honey
1 T. (14 g.) Dijon mustard
5/8 t. kosher salt
5 T. olive oil
5 T. canola oil (or use olive oil)

Place the first four ingredients in a small bowl. Whisk until smooth. Drizzle in the oils, whisking constantly to form an emulsion. Taste and correct the seasoning with salt and more vinegar or oil as necessary. The vinaigrette should be tangy and sweet.

Makes a generous cup. This is more than you need for the salad, but the vinaigrette keeps well in a jar in the fridge and is wonderful on salads featuring autumn fruits and/or roasted winter squash.

Candied Pepitas:

1 T. sugar

1/4 t. kosher salt

Pinch of cayenne (to taste)

2 t. unsalted butter

1/2 c. raw pumpkin seeds

1 t. honey

Combine the sugar, salt and cayenne in a small ramekin and set aside. Spray a plate or small sheet pan with pan spray (or brush lightly with oil). Set aside.

In a small non-stick sauté pan set over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the pumpkin seeds and toss to coat. Sprinkle the sugar mixture over the pepitas and toss to coat. Continue to cook, stirring and tossing until the sugar has melted and the pumpkin seeds are popping a bit and are lightly colored. Remove the pan from the heat. Wait 30 seconds. Drizzle in the honey and toss to coat.

Spread the candied pepitas out on the prepared plate/pan and let cool—stirring occasionally as they cool so that they will be separate rather than clumpy.

Store the candied pepitas in an airtight container at room temperature.

<https://www.forloveofthetable.com/2024/11/autumn-salad-with-grapes-celery-blue.html>

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