

Roasted Pumpkin or Squash, Labneh, Walnut or Pumpkin seed Gremolata and Pomegranates

The Gazebo Group



roasted pumpkin, labneh, walnut gremolata, and pomegranates

One of my favorite dishes. Instead of pumpkin, you can use carrots or beets (or a mixture of the two) and you can also replace the spinach leaves with watercress, if you prefer.

SERVES 4

FOR THE LABNEH

1¼ cups Greek yogurt
1 garlic clove, crushed
good pinch of salt

FOR THE PUMPKIN AND SALAD

2¾ lb of pumpkin or butternut squash or other winter squash
¼ cup olive oil
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 inch piece of ginger root, peeled and finely chopped
black pepper
juice of ½ small lemon
4 cups baby spinach leaves
small bunch of cilantro leaves
seeds from ¼ pomegranate

FOR THE GREMOLATA

⅓ cup walnut pieces
zest of 1 lemon (removed with a zester)
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley

FOR THE DRESSING

2 teaspoons pomegranate molasses
smidgen of Dijon mustard
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
pinch of sugar (optional)
squeeze of lemon

Make the labneh the day before you want to serve the dish, as on page 104, using the yogurt, garlic, and salt.

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Halve the squash and scoop out and discard the seeds and fibers. Cut into slices about 1 inch thick at the thickest part. (If you are using a long butternut squash, you can halve it horizontally as well as lengthwise before cutting the wedges, otherwise you could have long slices.) Peel each slice if you want, or you can leave the skin on if you don't mind discarding it when you are eating the dish. (Sometimes it is actually thin enough to eat.)

In a small saucepan, heat the regular olive oil, cinnamon, cayenne, and ginger. Put the wedges of squash into a roasting pan and pour the spicy mixture over them, using your hands to make sure the squash gets well coated. Season with salt and black pepper.

Put into the hot oven and roast for 35 minutes, or until tender and slightly caramelized, basting every so often. Put into a serving dish and squeeze the lemon over the top.

Make the gremolata by toasting the walnuts in the oven for five minutes (keep an eye on them because they burn easily). Now simply chop everything for the gremolata together.

Take the drained labneh out of its cheesecloth and gently break it up into nuggets.

Put the pomegranate molasses, mustard, and salt and black pepper into a small bowl and whisk in the extra virgin oil. Taste and add the sugar (if using) and lemon; you really have to work on this dressing to get a good sweet-sour balance, so use your taste buds.

Using about three-quarters of the dressing, gently toss the spinach, cilantro, and pumpkin together in a wide, shallow bowl.

Dot nuggets of labneh over the salad. Sprinkle with the gremolata and pomegranate seeds, drizzle the rest of the dressing over the top, and serve.

From Page 104

FOR THE LABNEH

1¼ cups Greek yogurt

1 garlic clove, crushed

good pinch of salt

Make the labneh the day before you want to serve the dish. Line a strainer with a piece of cheesecloth and set it over a bowl. Mix the yogurt with the garlic, salt, and pepper. Transfer to the cloth, tie it up, and refrigerate. The yogurt will lose moisture over the next 24 hours, producing a firmer, “cheeselike” substance. Help it along by giving it a squeeze every so often.