

MEDITERRANEAN SUMMER SALAD

his summer salad has a number of steps, but the results are well worth it! Some items can be prepared ahead of time. Perfect for an evening on the patio.



Doshic Notes

Vata :: enjoy

Pitta :: enjoy

Kapha :: eat in moderation

INGREDIENTS

3 – 4 cups leafy greens of your choice

Avocado dressing

1 cup lentil-zucchini mix

1 cup couscous

1 cup beets

6 Tbs. soft goat cheese

Fresh ground black pepper

Cilantro, fresh, chopped fine

PREPARATION

Toss the greens with the avocado dressing and arrange on serving plate or bowl. Then layer the lentils, couscous, and beets (see recipes below) on top of the dressed greens. Drop the goat cheese by tablespoons around the platter. Grind a bit of pepper on top and sprinkle with chopped cilantro.

Lentil-Veggie Marinade

Simmer together for 20 minutes: 1 cup water, 1/4 cup French lentils, and 1 pinch of hing. While this is cooking, mix 1/4 cup fennel, chopped, and 2 Tbs. dill with a pinch of salt and pepper, 1 Tbs. rice vinegar, and 2 tsp. olive oil. Lightly sauté 1/2 cup zucchini in chopped shallots, sunflower oil, and rice vinegar. Cool the lentils and zucchini then mix all ingredients together and let marinate in refrigerator overnight or for 4 hours.

Couscous

Sauté 1/2 cup Israeli (pearl) couscous with 2 tsp. sunflower oil for 2 – 3 minutes. Add 3/4 cup water or broth, bring to a boil then reduce heat to simmer 10 – 15 minutes. Toss together with 2 Tbs. chopped parsley, juice of 1/2 lemon, 1/2 tsp. salt, and 1/4 tsp. pepper. Can use warm or prepare ahead and refrigerate.

Cooking the Beets

Take one medium to large-sized red or golden beet and cut in quarters. Peel the tough outer layer away. Steam the quarters in a covered pan with a steamer basket and 1 inch of water for 20 minutes, until done. Allow to cool, chop into 1/2 inch pieces, and store in refrigerator until ready to assemble salad.

AVOCADO DRESSING

1 small ripe avocado

1 Tbs. lime juice

2 Tbs. rice vinegar

1/2 cup olive oil

1 tablespoon chopped parsley

1 tablespoon chopped cilantro

Salt and pepper to taste

Cut the avocado in half, working around the pit. Twist apart and remove the pit with a knife. Scoop out the flesh with a teaspoon and put it in a blender or small food processor. Add the remaining ingredients and blend until smooth and well mixed then season with salt and fresh ground pepper.

Tips

Cook the lentils, beets, and couscous the day before or in the morning of the day you plan to serve the salad. The cooked ingredients need at least 4 hours to marinate and/or chill in the refrigerator. A filling yet cooling meal as the sun sets, you can substitute roasted pine nuts for the goat cheese as a vegan option.

You can substitute other summer vegetables for the zucchini such as green beans, yellow squash, red bell peppers, corn, etc. If you already have some cooked, just add them to the lentil marinade.

While beets have a pungent vipak (post-digestive effect), they also have a sweet rasa (taste) and cooling virya (energy). Their heavy quality helps to add needed moisture to the digestive tract.

The heavy effects of the cheese, beets, and couscous serve to counteract the light and rough qualities of leafy greens and the rough quality of the lentils. The overall effect of this salad is balancing in the summertime, when the sweet, cooling qualities of the foods are desirable.