

Sumac Scented Fennel & Tangerine Salad

I love fennel. Raw, roasted, braised ... any way. It might be because the licorice-y taste was implanted in us as small children when my grandmother would dip the corner of a cloth into arak if we had a toothache ... maybe. Either way, I love it. it's crunchy, fresh, and the perfect salad addition to a table full of heavy dishes (shout out to Shabbos). The orange pairs perfectly with the fennel and what I love most about this is that the season for this bright, wake-up-your-taste-buds salad is the winter!

2 large fennel bulbs
2 tangerines (or 1 blood orange OR tangelo OR orange)
1 small purple onion, thinly sliced
¼ cup rice vinegar
2 tsp sumac, or more to taste
¾ tsp kosher salt
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
2 tsp honey
¾ cup olive oil
6 cups baby arugula or baby spinach

Trim fennel bulb root ends and cut woody stalks from the top of the bulbs. Cut fennel bulbs in half. Using a mandolin or Asian slicer, carefully shave fennel into paper thin slices (should yield about 8 cups). Place shaved fennel into a large bowl.

Segment tangerines: Cut polar ends off. Using a serrated knife, gently cut away peel, sawing away around the curvature of the fruit to remove the peel and pith. Working over a second bowl, make a cut on either side of each membrane, then give a slight push to release the fruit segment into the bowl. You should be left with a mass of membranes. Squeeze the membranes over a bowl or measuring cup to extract as much juice as possible; discard membranes. Pour accumulated juices into a measuring cup to measure ¼ cup (you can supplement with orange juice if you don't have enough). Remove any pits from tangerine segments; add segments to the fennel.

Prepare the dressing: In a large bowl, combine reserved ¼ cup tangerine

juice, rice vinegar, sumac, salt, pepper, and honey. Whisk to blend. Whisking continuously, slowly drizzle in olive oil until well blended and emulsified. Season to taste, as needed. Before serving, add arugula to fennel and tangerines. Toss with half of the dressing, adding more as needed to coat.

Variation

Consider adding leftover chicken to this dish to make it a complete meal. You can shred leftover roasted chicken, slice some leftover grilled chicken, or even add some roughly chopped pieces of a good store-bought rotisserie chicken!

Moroccan Stuffed Artichokes

If you've ever walked into any Sephardic restaurant or takeout place, then you already know exactly what these are. If you haven't, then you need to make them, because they are absolutely delicious. The buttery artichoke, with the hearty meat and the earthy turmeric and bright lemon, make the most wonderful combination, resulting in the comfort food you didn't know you were missing.

20 oz frozen or canned artichoke hearts (defrosted) not marinated

Stuffing

2.2 lb ground beef
1/2 cup chopped cilantro leaves
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 egg, lightly beaten
1 tsp kosher salt
1/2 tsp coarsely ground black pepper
1 tsp paprika
1/2 tsp ground cumin
1/4 tsp coriander
1/8 tsp ground ginger
1 Tbsp white vinegar

Dredging

4 eggs, well beaten

2 cups flour

To cook

2 Tbsp avocado oil

1 onion, diced

5 stalks celery, peeled, cut into 2-inch pieces

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 tsp turmeric

1 lemon, halved

3 cups chicken stock (additional 1/2-1 cup, as needed)

1/2 cup cilantro leaves

Place artichoke hearts onto a sheet pan. In a large bowl, combine all stuffing ingredients, mixing until incorporated. Fill artichoke hearts with stuffing mixture, filling fully and letting stuffing bulge out a bit. Return to sheet pan.

In a large bowl, combine dredging ingredients. Dip stuffed artichoke hearts into mixture, allowing excess to drip back into the bowl. Return to sheet pan. When all artichoke hearts are filled and coated, heat avocado oil in a high walled pan over medium high heat. Add prepared artichoke hearts. Sauté on both sides, using the backs of 2 spoons to gently turn them so they don't break. You may need to do this in batches so as not to overcrowd the pan. Transfer sautéed artichoke hearts to the sheet pan as they are done.

Make sauce

To the same pan, add onion, celery, and garlic. Cook 4-5 minutes until onion and celery soften just a bit. Add turmeric and cook for 1 minute. Squeeze in lemon juice. Add stock, using a wooden spoon to scrape up any bits accumulated on the bottom of the pan. Add stuffed artichokes to the sauce. Add cilantro. Reduce heat to low and cover the pan. Simmer for 1 1/2 hours, basting every 20 minutes. Serve hot and enjoy!

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