

08/23/12 - Salad of Grilled Romaine

In the produce section of markets lately there is a new little lettuce available. Small 'baby' romaine in different colors, not romaine hearts, comes usually four to a plastic box. Some of the lettuces have red tips, are all red, or even curly leaves. These assorted artisan, gem, or baby romaine inspired me to make a salad using



The trend in fashionable Los Angeles restaurants is grilled lettuce in artfully composed salads served on austere plates, round, square, or rectangular. They are delightful. I made my own version using another current trend of topping things with an egg, chicken, quail or duck, cooked sunny side up. The eggs should have a crispy fringe fried in olive oil or butter, surrounding a smooth tender white section with a velvety cream of yolk in the middle.

Biting into a forkful of grilled lettuce, heirloom tomato drizzled with a bit of Caesar-like dressing and fried egg is a flavor and texture combination not to be missed.

Serves 4

Dressing:

1 teaspoon anchovy paste

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

1 large clove garlic (minced very tiny)

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Freshly ground pepper

1/4 cup olive oil

1 1/2 tablespoons crumbled goat cheese

1/4 cup Parmigiano Reggiano

Salad:

1 large red bell pepper, charred, peeled, seeded and julienned

1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes cut in half

4 baby romaine lettuces, little gems

Olive oil

12 one inch buffalo mozzarella balls or one large cut into bite size pieces

2 or more teaspoons olive oil

4 extra large eggs, cracked into individual small bowls

You can make the dressing up to several days ahead. Whisk together ingredients up to lemon juice. Whisk in lemon juice to make a thick creamy paste. Next, whisk while adding olive oil in a steady stream to create a thick dressing. Add goat cheese and whisk until goat cheese is mostly blended into dressing. Lastly, add parmesan cheese. Use on salad, or store in refrigerator for several days in a container with a tight fitting lid.



Heat grill on high. You may use an indoor grill, outdoor barbecue, or a ridged grill pan. Wash and dry lettuce. Leave lettuce whole. Remove any leaves with damage. Set lettuce on a plate and brush with olive oil. Place lettuce on hot grill and leave it for about 30 seconds, then, turn over and grill second side for another 30 seconds. Lettuce should be barely wilted on outer leaves with a few black grill marks. The goal is to mark the lettuce and to impart a smoky flavor not cook it.

Place each lettuce on individual serving dishes. Scatter peppers, tomatoes, buffalo mozzarella balls over lettuce. Next spoon a little dressing on each salad. Heat a small sauté pan on medium-high heat. Add oil to hot pan and add one egg. Fry egg until white is cooked and yolk is soft. Place egg on top of salad. Repeat with additional eggs and salads. Serve immediately.



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