

11/15/10 - Papaya and Asian Beef Salad

Food in Hawaii is a flavorful, and I do mean full of flavor, mélange of many cuisines. Food heavily influenced with Japanese sensibilities, indigenous or local ingredients, Thai and Chinese flavorings and lots of fresh fruit and charcoal grills is wonderfully appealing.

I could exist on papayas, pineapple, and fish for most meals. However, one afternoon on my husband and my recent trip, we observed the food being consumed with relish on all of the tables around us, while we dined at Mama's Fish House near Paia, Maui. This one dish of grilled half papayas with a Thai flavored beef salad caught my eye, so I made sure to check the menu listing for the ingredients. It was easy to prepare a kosher version.

Mama's Fish House is an institution on Maui and reservations are a must if you ever get over there, but in the meantime you can make this salad at home as I recreated it. After Thanksgiving I will post a couple of fish dishes we also enjoyed at Mama's, just fantastic.



3 papayas, yellow or pink, cut in half
1 (14 ounce) Spencer steak, sliced in 1 inch chunks

4-6 garlic cloves, finely minced

3 tablespoons fresh grated ginger root

3-4 green onions, minced

1 jalapeño

1/2 cup chopped cilantro

1/2 cup chopped mint

3 Persian cucumbers cut in half rounds

1/2 red bell pepper, finely diced

9 heirloom cherry or grape tomatoes, cut in half or, 1/2 large heirloom tomato, diced

2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil

2 teaspoon Ponzu (Japanese citrus vinegar)

3 tablespoons fresh squeezed lime juice

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 tablespoon soy sauce

1 tablespoon toasted Asian sesame seeds



Preheat your barbecue or indoor grill. A ridged grill pan will also work. Cut papayas in half and scoop the seeds out. Brush each half with a little olive oil and grill them, cut flesh side down for a few moments to obtain a little smoky flavor and beautiful grill marks. Remove papaya halves from grill and set aside while you marinate



Place steak chunks in a medium mixing bowl. Add half of the minced garlic, half of the minced ginger, 2 tablespoons of the minced green onion, 1 tablespoon of the lime juice, soy sauce, 1 teaspoon of the sesame oil, and olive oil. Toss meat to



In the meantime in a larger bowl combine the rest of the garlic, ginger, and jalapeño. Add cucumber, red bell pepper, cilantro, mint, tomatoes, and green onions. In a small cup mix the rest of the lime juice, sesame oil, Ponzu, and vegetable oil.







When vegetable portion is assembled grill meat chunks until nicely marked and cooked to the degree you like. Toss grilled meat in with dressing and then, into vegetable salad. Finally, toss in toasted sesame seeds. Portion out the salad into the grilled papaya halves.



Serve this as a starter course to any meal or as a light lunch but be sure to remove the sticky tags off of the papayas before you grill them. You can see in the photo I forgot to do it..oops.

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