

11/28/11 - Persimmon Salad With Butter Lettuce

Some years ago I had the pleasure of eating at a local restaurant here in Los Angeles called Table 8. Although Table 8 has unfortunately since closed, Chef Govind Armstrong continues with a new restaurant. One salad I enjoyed was with butter lettuce and persimmons. I have tried to recreate something similar relying on my memory. The flavor combination was very satisfying and the contrasting bright colors very appetizing.

Serves 4

1/4 cup pomegranate juice

1/4 cup sugar

1 head Butter lettuce, washed and dried

2 Belgian endive, washed and dried

2 ripe Hachiya persimmons, peeled, seeded, and sliced in segments

1/3 cup fresh pomegranate arils (seeds)

4 Medjool dates cut into 1/4 inch circles

1/3 cup glazed pecans

1/4 cup walnut oil

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoon red wine vinegar (I buy kosher Chilean red wine vinegar)

Salt

Fresh ground pepper

1 tablespoon finely minced chervil

1/2 cup toasted croutons made from whole grain walnut bread (optional)



In a small saucepan over medium heat, boil together pomegranate juice and sugar until reduced in volume by a half and syrupy. Set syrup aside.

Arrange Butter lettuce leaves on 4 salad plates. Fan out endive leaves on top of lettuce leaves. Scatter croutons, arrange persimmon slices and scatter pomegranate arils on top of lettuce and endive. Distribute date pieces and glazed pecans on top of salad. Hachiya persimmons are long and thin and they are ripe when they are soft. If you eat them when they are not ripe they tend to be quite astringent. They have round seeds in the center, so I cut slices around the core.

Combine oil, lemon juice, and red wine vinegar in a small bowl and whisk together. Add salt and pepper and whisk again. Dress salad by lightly spooning a little dressing on top of each plate. Place pomegranate juice syrup in a squeeze bottle with a narrow tip. Drizzle or make drops of syrup over the plate to decorate.

Sprinkle bits of Chervil on top and serve. This is a beautiful salad to serve with fish. Persimmons are currently in season. You could decorate this further with little mini fresh mozzarella balls.



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