



Zucchini Salad 2 ways, with cucumber and spicy/sweet pepitas

Level: Easy

Duration: 20 minutes

Serves 4-6 as side dish

3 large zucchini (two will be cut into ribbons (strips), one will be grated)

3 small-medium Persian cucumbers, sliced into ½- ¼" rounds

1 cup roasted, salted pepitas

1-2 T good, organic honey

1 tsp cayenne pepper

Juice of 1 lemon

Good Olive oil

S/P

Heat a small pan on low and add honey until it heats, add pepitas and cayenne and stir to combine. Cool.

With a peeler, cut 2 zucchini into ribbons, or strips, peeling vertically, (discard the first peel as there will be too much skin). Rotate and keep peeling, until finished. With a grater, grate 1 zucchini.

Slice cucumbers into rounds.

Combine the vegetables in a bowl or platter, toss with lemon juice and olive oil, top with pepitas and s/p.



Pear Nectar and Thyme “Mimosa” Mocktail

Level: Easy

Time: 5 minutes

Serves 4-6

1 bottle sparkling wine, chilled

12 oz pear nectar
4-6 sprigs thyme

Into a champagne flute, fill 1/3 of the glass with pear nectar then top with sparkling wine.

Thyme – gently rub each sprig to release the oils and place into flute.

Cheers!



"Luca" Pasta

Orecchiette with Italian veggie sausage and broccoli

Level: Easy

Time: 30 minutes, including prep

Serves 4-6

2 bunches broccoli, cut into small florets

12 oz dried orecchiette pasta

3 T olive oil

1 lb vegetarian Italian sausage such as "Beyond Meat" or "Impossible" products

3 garlic cloves, minced

Pinch of red pepper flakes

Handful of very good Parmesan such as Parmigiano Reggiano

Freshly ground pepper, to taste

Bring a large pot of water, generously salted, to boil. Add the broccoli and quick cook, just one or two minutes. Scoop out with a spider or hand held colander, transfer to a bowl. Keep the water on a low boil.

Meanwhile, in a large, heavy skillet add the oil, warm oil until glistening. Add the sausage and cook, breaking it up with a wooden spoon. Cook through, about 8-10 minutes. Add garlic and red pepper flakes, then add the broccoli, tossing to coat.

Turn up the water and bring to rolling boil, add pasta and cook until al dente, about 8 minutes.

Drain the cooked pasta, reserving one cup or so of the pasta water. Add to broccoli/sausage mixture, adding the reserved pasta water, just a bit at a time to keep moist. Stir in the Parmesan just before serving, salt and pepper to taste.

Transfer to a platter for family style serving or individual bowls.



Fresh Berries with Homemade Sweet Ricotta

Level: Easy

Time: 45-50 minutes, including prep

Serves 4-6

6-8 oz each of fresh raspberries, strawberries (hulled and quartered) and blueberries

4-6 mint leaves

Ricotta

4 C whole milk

2C heavy cream

1t salt, kosher

3T white wine vinegar (use a good vinegar)

Sweetened ricotta

2T honey

1T sugar (optional)

1 t vanilla extract

Mix the ingredients into the fresh ricotta

(if you have made the unsweetened ricotta and put in the refrigerator, before serving with the berries, let it come to room temperature before adding the honey and vanilla)

Homemade Ricotta

Place a fine mesh sieve over a large bowl. Place two pieces of cheesecloth (lightly dampened with water) and line the sieve with the cheesecloth.

In a medium pot with a heavy bottom (stainless steel or a Le Cueset type – no aluminum or Teflon), add the milk, cream and salt. Bring to a full boil, stirring a bit. Turn off heat and add vinegar. It will curdle in approximately 1-2 minutes and separate (curds and whey).

Pour the mixture into the sieve and allow it to drain for 20-25 minutes, depending on the texture you prefer. If soft, 20 minutes, if harder, 25 minutes. Transfer to a bowl, and discard the cheesecloth.

Mix berries in a large bowl, stirring carefully. Divide into Mason jars or dessert cups, top with a dollop of sweetened ricotta and mint leaf.



Fresh Burrata on Grilled Bread

Level: Easy

Time: 10 minutes

Serves 4-6 as an appetizer

1 Loaf rustic bread, sliced on the diagonal into approximately ½” slices

Approximately 8 -10 oz fresh Burrata cheese, preferably artisanal

Drizzle of a VERY good EVOO

Maldon Salt, to taste, optional

Heat a grill pan or grill, and grill the bread slices, until light grill marks appear.

Place burrata in center of serving dish, surrounded by grilled bread and a serving spreader for cheese

Drizzle platter entire platter lightly with olive oil and a light sprinkle of salt on the cheese

*This is also easy and delicious to plate individually with an arugula sprig or two on top

