



Eggplant, Pear and Pecorino Salad

Servings: 4

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Start to Finish Time: 40 minutes

This is a perfect mix of sweet (honey & pears), salty (cheese) and tart (vinegar). The nuts gave it an earthy texture. A GREAT side dish!

1/3 cup walnuts, chopped

1 1-1/4 pound eggplant, peeled and sliced lengthwise 1/4 inch thick

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

salt and pepper, to taste

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

2 each Bosc pear, peeled, cored and sliced lengthwise 1/4 inch thick

1 tablespoon Cognac, or other brandy

1 small clove garlic, minced

1 1/2 tablespoon red wine vinegar, or Peach vinegar

2 tablespoon parsley, chopped

1 tablespoon chopped chives, chopped

1 tablespoon honey

Pecorino Romano cheese, thin shavings

There's a saying in Italy that one should never tell a farmer just how good his cheese and pears taste together (presumably because if he knew, he would hoard them all). In this salad, Chef Silvana Baranzoni adds eggplant and walnuts to that beloved duo.



Preheat the oven to 350°F.

In a pie plate, toast the walnuts for about 5 minutes, until lightly browned. Let cool, then coarsely chop.

Light a grill or preheat a grill pan. Brush the eggplant slices with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill the eggplant over moderately high heat until lightly browned and tender, about 2 minutes per side.

In a large skillet, melt the butter. Add the pear slices and cook over moderate heat, tossing, until just starting to soften, 3 minutes. Add the Cognac and toss the pears to coat thoroughly; remove from the heat.

In a small bowl, whisk 3 tablespoons of oil with the garlic, vinegar, 1 tablespoon of the parsley and 1/2 tablespoon of the chives. Season the vinaigrette with salt and pepper.

Arrange the eggplant slices on a platter and drizzle with the vinaigrette. Arrange the pear slices over the eggplant and drizzle with the honey. Scatter the walnuts, cheese and the remaining 1 tablespoon of parsley and 1/2 tablespoon of chives over the top. Serve.