



Escarole with Pine Nuts and Raisins

Servings: 2

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Start to Finish Time: 35 minutes

This dish is not only a delicious side, but also a healthy meal packed with antioxidants.

1/4 cup pine nuts (pignolia)

1 each escarole head, cleaned and chopped into 2-inch pieces

2 slices bacon, cut into 1/2-inch pieces

2 cloves garlic, diced

1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)

2 tablespoons butter

1/4 cup raisins

salt and pepper, to taste

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil (your best)

1/3 cup Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, grated

This recipe is a tribute to a dish I had in 1995 at the Spring Lake Pizza parlor in Spring Lake, NJ. Alongside the classic chicken parmesan and eggplant rolentini, they served escarole as a main course. The inspiration to recreate this dish came from my desire to relive that memorable dining experience from over two decades ago.

NOTE: Escarole is a variety of endive that goes by many names: broad-leaved endive, Bavarian endive, and Batavian endive. While escarole may look like a very enthusiastic head of romaine lettuce, there's a lot of complexity hiding in its loosely curled leaves.

Toast the pine nuts in a small skillet over low heat until they begin to sweat and release their aroma, around 5 minutes. Set aside.

In a large skillet, cook the bacon over medium-high heat until it is crisp. Use a slotted spoon to remove the bacon from the skillet and set it aside on a paper towel, but leave all of the rendered bacon fat in the pan.

Add the garlic and red pepper flakes (optional) to the skillet and cook for 30 seconds to release their flavors.

Add the butter and cleaned escarole to the skillet and mix it together with the contents of the pan, turning constantly for around 3-5 minutes.

Add the toasted pine nuts and raisins to the skillet and continue to cook for another 5 minutes until the thicker parts of the escarole become translucent yet still retain a bit of crunch.

Salt and pepper to taste.

Transfer the contents of the skillet to a serving bowl. Drizzle olive oil over the top, then sprinkle with the Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese and finally the leftover bacon bits.

Serve alongside a nice loaf of Italian bread.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 610 Calories; 52g Fat (74.1% calories from fat); 21g Protein; 20g Carbohydrate; 4g Dietary Fiber; 84mg Cholesterol; 589mg Sodium; 13g Total Sugars; trace Vitamin D; 552mg Calcium; 2mg Iron; 493mg Potassium; 186mg Phosphorus. Exchanges: .

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