

Harvest Salad with Pumpkin, Feta and Pumpkin Seeds

Learn how to prepare the widely popular fall and winter seasonal ingredient winter squash! This recipe features a light and herbaceous homemade vinaigrette which complements the pumpkins rich and satisfying flavors. The combination of this superfood with zesty feta and nutty pumpkin seeds will deliver flavor and nutritional benefit!

Goals of the Class:

1. Chef to identify types of winter squash and demonstrate how to prepare winter squash for cooking.
2. Learn the process of the roasting culinary cooking technique.
3. Learn the techniques involved in crafting homemade vinaigrettes.

Nutrition Spotlight:

Pumpkin (winter squash family) are rich in folate, omega-3 fatty acids, copper, and vitamins B1, B3, and B6. These health compounds have **powerful antioxidants and anti-inflammatory benefits**. Winter squash is also diabetic friendly because it a great **source of healthy carbohydrates**.

Roasting is considered **a healthy cooking technique**. During the roasting process, caramelization occurs. Caramelization is the browning of vegetables which brings out their natural sugars and adds a depth of flavor.

Pumpkin Seeds are high in omega 3 fatty acid, this is good for brain and heart health.

Feta cheese and pumpkin seeds are great sources of natural sodium! By seasoning with fresh herbs and spices and allowing the vegetables to caramelize, you will not need to add any additional salt!

Key Techniques & Helpful Hints

1. Halloween or Jack o lantern pumpkins are perfect for carving not for eating. Look for baking; "pie" or "sugar" pumpkins that have hard thick skins but have sweet flesh inside.
2. Choose a squash that has a dull, deep-colored rind, is heavy for it's size, and is free of moldy or soft spots.
3. Winter squash can be baked, steamed, simmered, stewed, mashed and puréed. Try seasoning with honey, real maple syrup, tamari or soy, ginger, nutmeg, curry, or cinnamon. All complement winter squash well.
4. Pumpkin seeds can be purchased for this recipe or see recipe below. Sometimes called pepitas, they are the edible seeds of a pumpkin or winter squash. Straight from the pumpkin they usually have a white outer hull that is edible. The green pepitas at most stores have the outer hull removed.
5. Included in this recipe are several recipe preparation twists! Serve this salad family style at your next get together, eat as a single serving at lunch or dinner or use mason jars to create a fun and nutritious shaker salad that will appeal to all audiences.

Get your hands in there and make your own Roasted Pumpkin Seeds: Carefully remove the seeds from the pulp after cutting the pumpkin. Place seeds between two paper towels and dry completely. Once dry, toss with olive oil, place on baking sheet and roast in a 425°F preheated oven until golden brown, about 15-20 minutes.

RECIPE

Harvest Salad with Pumpkin Feta and Pumpkin Seeds

5 servings

Ingredients

For the Roasted Pumpkin:

- 5 pounds sugar pumpkin
- 2 tablespoons olive/canola oil (in mister bottle)
- 1 tablespoon McCormick salt free seasoning blend

For the Lemon Thyme Vinaigrette:

- 1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 1/2 tablespoons white balsamic vinegar
- 1 1/4 teaspoons honey
- 1 1/4 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- pinch of ground black pepper
- 1/3 cup olive/canola oil
- 1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme

For the Salad:

- 7-1/2 cups arugula
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 2 tablespoons hulled pumpkin seeds
- 5 tablespoons lemon thyme vinaigrette



Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F.
2. **To Roast the Pumpkin:** Split the pumpkin in half and scoop out the seeds. Cut each half in half and then use a peeler to take off the skin. Cut each of the quarters into 1 inch across strips. Lay the pumpkin strips in a single layer on a parchment lined baking sheet. Spray with oil and sprinkle with McCormick salt free blend. Bake for 45 minutes or until tender.
3. **For the Lemon Thyme Vinaigrette:** Combine the lemon juice, balsamic, honey, Dijon, salt and pepper in the bowl. Slowly drizzle in oil whisking to emulsify. Finish with fresh thyme. Reserve cold until ready to use.
4. **For Family Style:** in large shallow bowl arrange the arugula on bottom, top with roasted pumpkin slices, sprinkle with feta and pumpkin seeds. Drizzle with vinaigrette.
5. **For Individual Salad:** toss 1-1/2 cups arugula, with 1 cup of the roasted pumpkin slices, 1- 1/2 tablespoons feta crumbles, 1 teaspoon pumpkin seeds, and 1 tablespoon vinaigrette.
6. **To Make Shaker Salad cup:** In 16 oz. mason jars layer ingredients as follows: 1-1/2 cups arugula, 1 cup roasted pumpkin slices, 1-1/2 tablespoons feta crumbles, and 1 teaspoon pumpkin seeds. Cover the jars with lids and portion 1 tablespoon of salad dressing into small containers, store in refrigerator. **To eat salad:** Remove lids from the cup. Pour contents of the dressing container into the cup. Replace the lid to salad and shake the salad until ingredients are mixed.

For the Salad (serving size is 1 each):

| CALORIES | FAT | SAT FAT | CARBS | PROTEIN | FIBER | SODIUM |
|----------|-----|---------|-------|---------|-------|--------|
| 304 | 23 | 6 | 19 | 8 | 2 | 296 |

For the Lemon Thyme Vinaigrette (serving size is 1 ounce):

| CALORIES | FAT | SAT FAT | CARBS | PROTEIN | FIBER | SODIUM |
|----------|-----|---------|-------|---------|-------|--------|
| 169 | 18 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 51 |