

vegetarian salad for dinner



INVENTIVE PLANT-FORWARD MEALS

80 recipes

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acorn squash, wilted red cabbage, apple, pumpkin seed dressing

3 TO 4 SERVINGS / GF, VEGAN OPTION

I have never been to Austria except in my imagination. In that idyll, a white-tablecloth restaurant with a glorious view and plenty of vegetarian menu options would serve this as their specialty. In keeping with the setting, accompany the salad with sourdough rye and chilled Grüner Veltliner. Because we're on holiday, why not finish with Linzer torte, Sachertorte, or strudel. Mâche is a tender baby lettuce often called lamb's lettuce. It's getting harder and harder to find, so watercress makes for a good green addition.

Dressing

½ cup raw cashew pieces

½ cup water

2 tablespoons pumpkin seed oil

1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar

1 small garlic clove, peeled

1 teaspoon honey or maple syrup

½ teaspoon salt, plus more for sprinkling

1 green onion, white and green parts kept separate, thinly sliced

Salad

1 acorn squash (about 1½ pounds), seeded and cut into 12 wedges

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 teaspoon paprika

2 teaspoons salt, plus more for roasting the squash

Honey or maple syrup (about 1 tablespoon), for drizzling

6 cups thinly sliced cored red cabbage (about ½ small head)

2 cups boiling water

1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar

1 tart green apple

2 cups mâche (lamb's lettuce or field lettuce) or watercress

Toasted pepitas (shelled pumpkin seeds), for sprinkling

For the dressing: Soak the cashews in the water in a small bowl for at least 2 hours or overnight. Transfer the cashews and water to a blender along with the oil, vinegar, garlic, honey, and salt. Add the green parts of the onion (reserve the white and pale green parts) and blend until very smooth. (*The dressing can be prepared up to 4 days ahead. Cover and refrigerate.*)

For the salad: Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Toss the squash with 1 tablespoon of the oil and the paprika on a heavy large sheet pan. Sprinkle with some salt and roast for 10 minutes. Turn the squash and roast until tender when pierced with a knife, about 10 minutes longer. Arrange the squash slices skin-side down and close together. Drizzle with honey. Return the squash to the oven and roast until glazed, about 3 minutes.

recipe continues

Meanwhile: Combine the cabbage and 2 teaspoons salt in a large bowl. Pour the boiling water over the cabbage and let stand for 30 minutes to 1 hour. Drain the cabbage, gently squeezing out any excess moisture. Transfer the cabbage to a bowl and toss with the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, the vinegar, and the white and light green parts of the green onion.

To serve: Divide the cabbage among plates. Using a V-slicer or mandoline, thinly slice the apple into rounds and scatter the rounds over the cabbage. Divide the squash among plates. Drizzle with dressing, sprinkle with the mâche and pepitas, and serve.

Note: Pumpkin seed oil is a dark green and very flavorful finishing oil. It's cold-pressed from Austrian Styrian pumpkin seeds. The oil is purported to have several benefits, including hair growth, breast firming, and prostate health, but I love it for its toasty rich flavor. La Tourangelle sells a very good one in specialty foods stores and online.

ROASTED SQUASH MIX AND MATCH

Slices or cubes of roasted squash are a colorful, seasonal way to bring flavor and nutrition to fall salads. The sweetness of the squash melds well with the gentle acid of vinaigrettes and dressings. If you garden or are blessed with the remnants of an autumn table cornucopia, you might find yourself with an abundance of, say, delicata, acorn, sweet dumpling, red kuri, butternut, or kabocha squash. Because there are so many orange-fleshed winter squash varieties to choose from, you can substitute one squash for another in the salads in this book. If you plan to swap out squash, simply check the weight measurement in the recipe and use that as your guide to end up with an appropriate amount of squash for the salad.