

Salt and Serenity

Israeli Couscous Salad

Serves 4 as side dish or light lunch

1 cup Israeli couscous
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 ¼ cups water
1 teaspoon Kosher salt
2 pints grape or cherry tomatoes
2 ears corn, peeled and shucked
3 sprigs fresh rosemary
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon Kosher salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
½ cup slivered almonds
2 shallots, peeled and cut into thin circles
¼ cup red or white wine vinegar
¼ cup water
1 tablespoon Kosher salt
1 teaspoon sugar
¼ cup coarsely chopped Italian parsley
2 ounces Parmesan cheese, thinly sliced with vegetable peeler or cheese slicer
5 ounces assorted lettuces (I used arugula, Belgian endive, radicchio and some pea shoots)

1. Preheat medium sized saucepan on high for a minute. Add olive oil and heat for another 30 seconds. Add couscous and stir to get grains coated in oil. Turn down heat to medium and continue to cook for another 2 minutes until grains begin to smell slightly toasted.
2. Add 1 teaspoon Kosher salt and 1¼ cups water. Bring to boil. Turn heat down to simmer and cover pot with lid. Depending on the size of your Israeli couscous, the cooking can take anywhere between 10-20 minutes. Check grains after 10 minutes. They should be pleasantly chewy but not crunchy. If they are still firm after 10 minutes, continue cooking, covered, and check them every 5 minutes. Remove couscous from pot and spread out on a plate or baking sheet to cool.

3. Preheat oven to 375°F. Spread tomatoes and corn on rimmed baking sheet. Mix with 2 Tablespoons olive oil and season with 1 teaspoon Kosher salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Place rosemary sprigs on pan. Roast for 15 minutes, until tomatoes are just beginning to split and corn is slightly golden brown. Remove from oven, discard rosemary sprigs and set aside.
4. Pickle shallots; in a small mixing bowl, combine ¼ cup vinegar, ¼ cup water, 1 Tablespoon Kosher salt and 1 teaspoon sugar. Add shallots and let sit for about 30 minutes. Drain; set aside pickled shallots and reserve pickling liquid.
5. Place assorted greens on large serving platter. Add couscous to baking sheet of tomatoes and corn. Mix well and taste for seasoning. Add 1-2 teaspoons of pickling liquid and mix again. Mound couscous mixture in center of lettuce lined platter. Garnish with pickled shallots, parsley, toasted almonds and slivers of Parmesan cheese.