

Salt and Serenity

Winter Squash Salad with Waffled Halloumi Croutons and Pomegranate Vinaigrette

Serves 4

1 medium butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
3 Tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon Diamond Crystal kosher salt (or ½ teaspoon Morton's kosher salt)
2 teaspoons smoked paprika
2 cups walnut halves
1 egg white
⅓ cup sugar
2 teaspoons Diamond Crystal kosher salt (or 1 teaspoon Morton's kosher salt)
2 teaspoons sumac
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
8 cups mixed greens, washed and well dried (your choice – I used a mix of baby kale, and micro arugula, but any mix of Tuscan kale, regular arugula, frisée, radicchio would be great)
½ pound Brussels sprouts
2 Tablespoons pomegranate juice
2 Tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 Tablespoon pomegranate molasses
2 teaspoons honey
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon sumac
½ teaspoon Diamond Crystal kosher salt (or ¼ teaspoon Morton's kosher salt)
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 pomegranate, seeded
340 grams halloumi cheese, cut into ½-inch thick slices
Cooking spray to lightly grease waffle iron

1. **Roast squash:** Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix squash with olive oil, salt and smoked paprika. Spread squash out in a single layer on a parchment lined baking sheet. Roast for about 45-50 minutes until golden brown. Set squash aside.
2. **Make spiced walnuts:** While squash is roasting, you can prepare the walnuts. In a medium sized bowl, beat egg white until foamy. Add walnuts and stir until well coated. Add sugar, salt, sumac, and cayenne and mix until all the nuts are coated. Dump nuts onto a parchment lined baking sheet and place in oven, on the rack above the squash. Bake for 12-15 minutes. Remove from oven and cool thoroughly. Break nuts apart and store in an airtight container. This recipe makes more walnuts than you will need for the salad, but they keep for several weeks.
3. **Prepare Brussels sprouts:** Cut core end off sprouts and slice in half. If you have a food processor with a slicing disc, now is the time to bust it out and slice the sprouts into a thin julienne. If not, you can certainly accomplish this with a sharp knife. Take your time and carefully slice sprouts into a thin julienne.
4. **Make dressing:** Dressing can be prepared in a blender, or with a whisk, by hand. **If using a blender**, add pomegranate juice, red wine vinegar, pomegranate molasses, honey, cinnamon, cumin, sumac, and salt to the blender jar. Process until well blended. With the blender on low speed, slowly drizzle in the oil until dressing is emulsified.

5. **If preparing dressing by hand**, place pomegranate juice, vinegar, pomegranate molasses, honey, cinnamon, cumin, sumac, and salt into a medium sized bowl. Whisk until combined. Slowly drizzle oil into bowl, while whisking.
6. **Assemble salad**: On a large platter, arrange greens, shredded sprouts, roasted squash, pomegranate seeds and some of the spiced nuts.
7. **Make halloumi croutons**: This step should be done just before serving, Heat waffle iron to medium heat setting. Spray waffle iron lightly with cooking spray. Place 4 slices of halloumi onto waffle iron. Close lid and cook for a few minutes until halloumi is golden brown and crispy. Repeat with remaining slices. Arrange halloumi on the salad. Drizzle with dressing and serve.