

Baked Goat Cheese and Brie Salad

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 40 minutes | Total Time: 40 minutes

Chef's Notes

This vinaigrette is quite tart; however, it balances the richness of the warm cheese. The rind can be trimmed off the brie, if desired. You can also substitute the almonds with any other toasted nuts.

Preparing the Cheese

To prepare the cheese rounds, first place the goat cheese into a bowl. Then tear the brie into pieces and add to the bowl, along with the zest of half a lemon.

Next, add the salt and pepper and then using the back of a wooden spoon, blend everything together. Just make sure to not over blend. There should still be little pieces of brie for contrast in taste and texture. Divide the cheese into four.

Lightly crush the toasted almonds. Gather a tray lined with plastic wrap and set aside.

Take one quarter of the cheese and roll it into a ball and then flatten it slightly to form a disc. Place the cheese into the almonds and roll to coat each side. Then set the cheese onto the tray and place into the refrigerator for at least 10 minutes to set and chill. (These can also be assembled the day before.)

If making immediately, preheat your oven to 350° degrees Fahrenheit.

Step 1: Preparing the Cheese

- 150 g goat cheese (5 oz)
- 100 g brie cheese (approx. 3)
- 1 whole lemon
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- 1/8 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup toasted, sliced almonds

Starting the Vinaigrette

To make the vinaigrette, roughly chop the herbs. Using the back of a heavy pan, crack the peppercorns.

Place a small saucepan over medium heat and add the water, honey, herbs and pepper. Bring everything to a simmer and let reduce for about 3 to 5 minutes. As it cooks, the flavors from the herbs will infuse into the honey. Once it has thickened slightly, turn off the heat and set aside.

Step 2: Starting the Vinaigrette

- 5 whole black peppercorns
- 1/4 cup water
- 4 tbsp honey
- 1 small spring thyme
- 1 small sprig lavender

Gathering the Rest of Your Ingredients

Before you bake the cheese, make sure to gather the rest of the ingredients.
(Once the cheese is ready it should be served immediately.)

Cut the lemon in half and measure out the olive oil. Gather the arugula and have some extra olive oil and salt on hand for tossing the salad. Lastly, have the serving plates ready.

Step 3: Gathering the Rest of Your Ingredients

- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 1/2 cups arugula (about 1 ounce)
- extra-virgin olive oil (to taste)
- kosher salt (to taste)

Baking and Starting to Assemble

Once ready to serve the salad, remove the cheese from the refrigerator and transfer to a parchment-lined baking tray.

The cheese bakes for only 2 to 3 minutes, so be sure to keep an eye on it. As soon as the tray goes into the oven you can quickly toss the salad. Squeeze a bit of lemon juice over the arugula, followed by a touch of olive oil and a pinch of salt. Toss gently to combine.

Divide the salad among the plates and then check on the cheese. Once the discs just begin to soften, remove them from the oven.

Step 4: Baking and Starting to Assemble

Finishing the Vinaigrette and Serving

To serve the dish, use a large spoon to gently transfer the cheese to each plate.

Quickly finish the vinaigrette by adding the juice of the other half of the lemon, along with the 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Whisk together to combine.

To finish, drizzle the vinaigrette over the cheese and around the plate. This dish is great as is, but it can also be garnished with a variety of ingredients, such as oven-dried tomatoes and orange segments. Serve with toasted bread smothered with roasted garlic for a delicious appetizer.

Step 5: Finishing the Vinaigrette and Serving