

Pear, Blue Cheese Salad w/ Easy Vinaigrette

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 10 minutes | Total Time: 10 minutes

Chef's Notes

As previously mentioned, I prefer this with bitter and spicy greens where the sweetness of the honey and acidity from the lemon compliment nicely. Also, fresh lemons are a must!

If you want to change things up a bit, try grainy mustard and play around with the amount of lemon juice (I prefer it to be fairly lemony). Just keep the honey to mustard ratio equal for best results.

Mix it up: Try poached pears or candied walnuts or pecans. I've used toasted filberts and pine nuts as well. Other cheese options are pecorino, reggiano, and goat cheese. I've even used fresh figs in place of the pears when they're in season. Comments or suggestions? Yes please!

Wine: Pairing wine with a dish that has a citrus component is always a challenge. Your best bet for this and most green salads is a well chilled un-oaked Sauvignon Blanc with its bright acidity, notes of grass, asparagus, and citrus. Ideal candidates come from New Zealand from producers such as Kim Crawford.

Step 1: Making the Vinaigrette

- juice of 1/2 a lemon
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 2 tsp liquid honey
- 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

Juice the lemon into a small bowl or glass measuring cup. Remove the seeds but keeping the pulp. Add the mustard and honey and whisk to combine. Taste. The lemon should be the predominate flavor and you should taste the honey and mustard equally. If not, adjust by adding equal amounts of honey and mustard.

Gradually whisk in the oil, increasing the whisking action at the end to emulsify the ingredients.

Step 2: Preparing Your Mise en Place

- 2 pears (preferably bosc)
- 4 handfuls baby arugula or mixed greens
- 1/4 cup toasted walnuts, whole
- 1/4 cup crumbled blue cheese

Quarter the pears lengthwise and remove the core. Cut each quarter in half so you end up with 16 wedges. If the pears are in good shape, there's no need to peel them unless you want to. Fan out half a pear (4 wedges) on the center of each plate.

Toss the greens with the vinaigrette until they are lightly coated. Evenly distribute the greens over the pears and sprinkle with the crumbled blue cheese and finger-crushed walnuts. Serve immediately.