

Eggplant, Pear and Manchego Salad

Makes 4 servings

1/3 cup walnuts

One 1 1/4-pound eggplant, peeled and sliced lengthwise 1/4 inch thick

Extra-virgin olive oil

Salt

Freshly ground pepper

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

2 Bosc pears-peeled, cored and sliced lengthwise 1/4 inch thick

1 tablespoon Cognac or other brandy

1 small garlic clove, minced

1 1/2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

2 tablespoons chopped parsley

1 tablespoon chopped chives

1 tablespoon honey

Thin shavings of Manchego or Pecorino Toscano cheese



Preheat the oven to 350°. In a pie plate, toast the walnuts for about 5 minutes, until lightly browned. Let cool, then coarsely chop.

Light a grill or preheat a grill pan (or roast in the oven as we did on the show). Brush the eggplant slices with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill or roast the eggplant over moderately high heat until lightly browned and tender, about 2 minutes per side.

In a large skillet, melt butter. Add pear slices and cook over moderate heat, tossing, until just starting to soften, 3 minutes. Add the Cognac and toss the pears to coat thoroughly; remove from the heat. If using gas stove, remove skillet before adding alcohol so it doesn't flame and burn you.

In a small bowl, whisk 3 tablespoons of oil with the garlic, vinegar, 1 tablespoon of the parsley and 1/2 tablespoon of the chives. Season the vinaigrette with salt and pepper.

Cut the eggplant slides in smaller pieces, arrange on a platter and drizzle with the vinaigrette. Arrange the pear slices over the eggplant and drizzle with the honey. Scatter the walnuts, cheese and the remaining 1 tablespoon of parsley and 1/2 tablespoon of chives over the top.



Apple-Pear Chutney

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, chopped
3 tablespoons mustard seeds
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
4 tart green apples, like Granny Smith, cored and cut into chunks
4 Anjou pears, cored and cut into chunks
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1 cup apple juice
1 tablespoon brown sugar
2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger



In a large saucepan, heat the olive oil over medium heat and add the onions, mustard seeds, and cinnamon. Stir to combine. Saute the mixture until the onions are translucent, about 3 minutes.

Stir in apples, pears, vinegar, apple juice, brown sugar, and fresh ginger. Cook for 1 minute, lower heat and simmer until the apples and pears are just soft, about 20 to 30 minutes.



Brussels Sprouts with Candied Walnuts and Green Apple

Yield 4

Candied Walnuts

1/4 cup walnut pieces
1 tablespoon butter
Salt
2 sprigs fresh rosemary or thyme, leaves picked off
2 tablespoons honey



Brussels Sprouts

2 pints Brussels sprouts, halved or quartered or sliced depending on size
1 tablespoon canola oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 Granny Smith apples, peeled, and cut into 1/2-inch pieces (or gala, honey crisp or yellow delicious)
1 tablespoon butter
Juice of 1 lemon
Optional: add 2 sliced shallots



To candy the walnuts:

Toast the nuts in a saute pan over medium heat with 1 tablespoon butter and 1 teaspoon salt. When the nuts start to take on a light golden color, add the rosemary or thyme and cook for 1 more minute. Add the honey to the pan and remove from the heat.

To roast the Brussels sprouts:

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Toss the Brussels sprouts with canola oil, 1 teaspoon salt and pinch freshly ground black pepper. Lay out on a sheet tray and roast for 10 to 12 minutes until they take color, but retain some texture. Remove from oven and set aside.

Chef's OPTIONAL PREPARATION: Sautee shredded or sliced Brussels Sprouts and shallots in 2T butter until tender - add chopped apple and cook until just soften. Top with walnuts.

To finish the dish:

Saute the Granny Smith apple pieces and shallots in 1 tablespoon butter until they just take on color, about 2 minutes. Add the candied walnuts and roasted Brussels sprouts. Toss, and then add the juice of 1 lemon and adjust the seasoning as necessary.