

roasted purple cauliflower with sherry vinaigrette

VEGAN

SERVES 6

45 MINUTES
(15 MINUTES
ACTIVE)

I invented this dish one day when I got off work at 2:45, and my wife informed me that we'd been invited to a potluck and needed to leave at 4:30. I knew we had nothing in the house, so I swung by the nearest store and grabbed the first interesting produce item that caught my eye: purple cauliflower.

The restaurant where I was working at the time, Café Flora, is well known for a vegetarian Caesar salad that uses fried capers to replace some of the saltiness that omnivores get from anchovies. I realized that the same capers would be great with roasted cauliflower, and I added a sherry vinaigrette to bring it all together.

You can certainly make this recipe with white, yellow, or green cauliflower. They all taste similar, so the difference is mainly visual.

FOR THE DRESSING

2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 garlic clove, minced
½ teaspoon kosher salt
5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

FOR THE BREAD CRUMBS

1 cup Homemade Bread Crumbs (page 345)
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

FOR THE CAULIFLOWER

2 heads purple cauliflower (about 4 pounds total, before trimming)
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
½ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ cup capers
½ cup vegetable oil
½ cup jarred roasted piquillo peppers or roasted red peppers, thinly sliced
Freshly ground black pepper
1 handful fresh flatleaf parsley leaves, minced, for garnish

- 1 Preheat the oven to 400°F using convection, or 425°F without convection.
- 2 *For the dressing:* Stir together the sherry vinegar, lemon juice, garlic, and salt in a small bowl. Drizzle in the olive oil, whisking continuously. Taste and adjust the seasoning, and set aside.
- 3 *For the bread crumbs:* Toss the bread crumbs with the minced garlic and olive oil, and set aside.



- 4 *For the cauliflower:* Break the cauliflower into large bite-sized florets. Peel the stem and chop into bite-size pieces.
- 5 Toss the cauliflower with the olive oil and salt, place on a rimmed baking sheet, and roast, tossing occasionally, until the cauliflower is quite tender with significant brown spots, about 20 minutes. You don't have real roasted flavor until you see those caramelized bits.
- 6 Meanwhile, rinse the capers and dry them well on paper towels. Heat the vegetable oil in a very small saucepan or skillet over medium-high heat. Carefully add the capers. Watch out for spattering! Fry until the capers are quite dark but not burned, about 1 minute, then remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.
- 7 When the cauliflower is done, let it cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes. Add the capers and red peppers. Toss with the vinaigrette, adding a little at a time until you reach your preferred level of saturation. I like it to be highly flavored but not drenched. Taste and adjust salt and pepper.
- 8 Set the oven on broil. Put the dressed cauliflower in an attractive, broiler-proof serving dish and top with the bread crumbs.
- 9 Place under the broiler long enough to make the bread crumbs nice and toasty, about 3 minutes. Garnish with the parsley and serve hot or warm.