

BISTRO SALAD WITH GOATS CHEESE CROUTES

INGREDIENTS

240gms goat cheese log (fresh chèvre-style goat cheese)
1/2 cup panko or bread crumbs (chilled)
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
6 cups lettuce (tender lettuces such as spring mix, butter lettuce, or oak leaf lettuce)
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon good quality red wine vinegar
1/4 teaspoon ground mustard
1 dash fine sea salt
1 dash freshly ground black pepper

METHOD

Step 1: Cut the goat cheese into 8 to 10 disks. Put the panko or bread crumbs into a shallow bowl. If you will be baking the goat cheese croutes, mix the vegetable oil in with the panko. Heat the oven to 180C if you will be baking the goat cheese croutes.

Step 2: For either preparation, press the goat cheese disks into the panko. Flip the disks to make sure both sides are completely covered and roll the edges through the panko as well. Set the coated goat cheese on a baking sheet or platter. Place the platter in the freezer for 15 to 30 minutes. This allows the croutes to set prior to cooking.

Step 3: While the goat cheese sets, tear the lettuce into bite-size pieces, wash and dry the lettuce, and set aside. If you are using herbs in addition to lettuce, wash, dry, and prepare them for the salad.

Step 4: In a large salad bowl, whisk together the olive oil, vinegar, and mustard. Add salt and pepper to taste and add the clean lettuce to the bowl.

Step 5: If cooking on the stove, heat the vegetable oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the goat cheese rounds. Cook, without disturbing, until they're brown on one side. Flip them over and cook until they're brown on the second side. Remove them from the heat and drain them on a paper towel-lined plate.

Step 6: Toss the salad gently to coat the lettuce thoroughly with the dressing. Divide the salad between four salad plates. Top each salad with 2 or 3 goat cheese croutes and serve immediately.

THE COOKERY

by The Secret Jozi Chef