

Modernized Caesar Salad

A timeless classic updated with a zesty dressing, creamy avocado, roasted cherry tomatoes and spicy garam masala chicken.

Ingredients Serves 2 as a main dish or 4 as an appetizer

Caesar dressing

1 small garlic clove, finely chopped
 2 anchovy fillets (packed in oil)
 ¼ tsp [1.25 ml] flaky sea salt (like Maldon)
 1 egg yolk
 1 tsp [5 ml] Dijon mustard
 1 tsp [5 ml] Worcestershire sauce
 2 tbsp [30 ml] lemon juice, freshly squeezed
 ½ cup [125 ml] extra-virgin olive oil
 2 tbsp [30 ml] water

Salad components

2 hearts of romaine (about 8 oz [225 g])
 10 cherry tomatoes (+ 1 tsp [5 ml] olive oil, fine sea salt and pepper)
 1 oz [30 g] bacon or pancetta
 3 slices of stale whole wheat (or white) bread (+1 tbsp [15 ml] olive oil and pepper)
 8 oz [225 g] chicken breast (+1 tbsp [15 ml] olive oil, fine sea salt and pepper)
 ¼ tsp [1.25 ml] garam masala powder
 1 avocado
 shaved Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (about ¾ oz [25 g])

Method

Make the dressing: In a mini food processor (or a blender), blend the garlic clove, the anchovy fillets and the sea salt together to make a paste. Add the egg yolk, mustard, Worcestershire sauce and lemon juice and pulse to mix everything together. Add the olive oil 2 tbsp [30 ml] at a time, blending on high speed between each addition to make sure the dressing emulsifies. Finish by adding the water and season to taste with pepper and just a little pinch of salt (keeping in mind the salad also contains seasoned chicken, bacon and parmigiano-reggiano). Transfer dressing to a screw-top jar and keep in the fridge until ready to use.

Prepare all the salad components: Preheat oven to 450°F [230°C].

Trim the hearts of romaine, then cut the leaves into 1-inch thick [2.5-cm] slices. Wash the lettuce thoroughly, then spin dry. Set aside in a large bowl.

Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil. In a medium bowl, mix the cherry tomatoes with 1 tsp [5 ml] olive oil, a pinch of sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Toss to make sure the tomatoes are well coated, then put the tomatoes on one side of the baking sheet, making sure they don't touch one another. Don't put in the oven yet.





Just Recipes.

Modernized Caesar Salad, cont'd

Cut the bread into bite-size cubes (remove the crust if you wish) and the bacon (or pancetta) into tiny bites. In the same bowl you used to mix the tomatoes, mix the bread cubes, bacon, 1 tbsp [15 ml] olive oil, and some freshly ground black pepper. Toss everything together then spread the bread/bacon mixture on the other side of the prepared baking sheet, making sure bread cubes are all set in one layer.

Roast tomatoes and bread cubes until the tomato skins burst open, the bread cubes are golden all over, and the bacon bites are browned and crisp, about 8 minutes. During the roasting process, stir the bread cubes every 2 minutes but leave the tomatoes alone. If the tomatoes are ready before the bread cubes, take them off the baking sheet and continue roasting the bread cubes until they are crunchy but not hard. Reserve both components until ready to serve.

Cook the chicken: Cut the chicken breast into long thin slices. In a medium bowl (still the same bowl!), mix the chicken with 1 tbsp [15 ml] olive oil, garam masala powder, freshly ground black pepper and a pinch of fine sea salt. Heat a medium pan over medium-high heat, then add the chicken. Let the chicken sit and gain some color before moving it around. Once the chicken pieces have a nice golden brown color you can flip them over (about 3 minutes). Remove from the pan as soon as the other side looks similar (about 3 minutes again). Cut into bite-size pieces while hot, then put back into the warm pan (off the heat!) until ready to serve.

Assemble the salad (right before serving - this salad doesn't like to wait!): Cut the avocado into cubes (you must do this last so it doesn't brown prematurely). Mix the romaine leaves with some of the dressing (to taste), then add the chicken bites, the bacon croutons and avocado. Carefully toss everything together, then separate in 2 or 4 bowls. Distribute the roasted cherry tomatoes and parmigiano-reggiano shavings. Serve with more dressing on the side. Enjoy!