

BLACK OLIVES AND ARUGULA ISRAELI COUSCOUS SALAD WITH ROASTED CHERRY TOMATO VINAIGRETTE

A recipe by **FoodNouveau**

INGREDIENTS

Makes 4 side-dish portions

For the roasted cherry tomatoes

- 2 cups (about 12 oz) [500 ml/340 g] cherry tomatoes
- 1 tbsp [15 ml] extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, left unpeeled
- ½ tsp [2.5 ml] sea salt
- freshly ground black pepper

For the vinaigrette

- 2 tbsp [30 ml] extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp [30 ml] water
- 1 tbsp [15 ml] white balsamic vinegar (or white wine vinegar)
- 1 tbsp [15 ml] freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ½ tsp [2.5 ml] sea salt
- freshly ground black pepper

For the couscous

- 1 tbsp [15 ml] extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup [250 ml] Israeli (or Jerusalem, or pearl) couscous
- 1¾ cups [425 ml] water
- ¼ cup [60 ml] Kalamata black olives, pitted and chopped
- ½ cup [125 ml] Lebanese cucumbers (or English cucumbers), diced
- ¼ cup [60 ml] chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 2 handfuls arugula (rocket) leaves
- 1 tsp [5 ml] chopped fresh thyme leaves

METHOD

To roast the cherry tomatoes: Preheat the oven to 300°F [150°C]. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Halve the cherry tomatoes and place in a mixing bowl. Add the olive oil, sea salt, and black pepper and mix carefully to coat the tomatoes without crushing them. Spread on a single layer on the parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Tuck the unpeeled garlic clove in-between the tomatoes and roast in the oven for 30 to 45 minutes, or until they have shrunk in size and are slightly shriveled around the edges. Let cool completely in the pan.

To make the vinaigrette: Once the roasted cherry tomatoes are completely cool, place half the tomatoes and all the vinaigrette ingredients in a tall measuring cup. Puree with a hand blender until you reach a smooth and silky consistency (you can also do this in a blender). Reserve.

To make the couscous: Heat the olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Add the Israeli couscous and stir until the



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beads are toasted and golden brown, about 5 minutes. Add the water. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 10 minutes, or until the couscous is al dente (soft with a bite). Note: You might need to use more or less water, depending on the brand of Israeli couscous you're using. Please refer to the manufacturer instructions. If you taste the couscous and you feel it's done but there's still water in the pan, drain it. Let the cooked couscous cool completely.

In a large mixing bowl, toss the couscous, black olives, and diced cucumber together. Add a few tablespoons of dressing and toss to distribute the dressing evenly. Add the parsley, arugula, thyme leaves and reserved roasted cherry tomatoes. Toss carefully just to mix the ingredients together. Taste, adjust seasoning, and add more dressing if needed. You can alternatively serve the extra dressing in a jar so your guests can add more to taste.

Serve immediately. If making the salad in advance, keep the arugula out and toss it into the salad just before serving.

Recipe Credit: Inspired by a recipe by Deb Perelman, Smitten Kitchen

Photo Credit: Marie Asselin

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