



Spiced Lamb Salad

(makes 4 servings)

The combination of lean, slightly pink lamb, watermelon and feta cheese is already a winner but add the nut, seed and spice mix and this becomes way more than just any old salad - it quickly becomes a household staple (and has 'picnic' written all over it as it stays fresh and delicious for hours in a sealed container!)

Ingredients

For the nut, seed and spice mix:

110g fresh hazelnuts
80g sesame seeds
2 tablespoons coriander seeds
2 tablespoons cumin seeds
2 teaspoons coarsely ground black pepper
1 teaspoon sea salt crystals

For the salad:

Zest and juice of 1 lemon
2 tablespoons Manuka honey
60mls extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
125g couscous
150mls boiling water
1 tablespoon light olive oil or coconut oil
500g lean lamb fillet in one piece
¼ watermelon, skinned, de-seeded and sliced or diced
150g Greek feta cheese, crudely crumbled
Small bag watercress (tough stalks removed)

Method

Dry fry the hazelnuts in a shallow sauté pan over a medium heat until they are golden brown and crunchy (watch them, they have a nasty habit of burning when you take your eye off them!)

Immediately put them between a few sheets of kitchen roll and rub vigorously until most of the outer skins come off then transfer them to a mortar and pestle or grinder and bash/grind until they are coarsely chopped.

In the same pan, toast the sesame seeds until golden before adding to the hazelnuts.

In the same pan, toast the coriander and cumin seeds until they start to 'pop' before transferring them to a mortar and pestle or grinder and blitzing until they are finely crushed then add them to the hazelnut/sesame seed mix.

Add the salt and pepper, mix well and set aside. Whisk the lemon zest, lemon juice, honey and the extra virgin olive oil in a bowl, season to taste and set aside.

Put the couscous in a medium-sized bowl, gradually pour over the boiling water, mixing with a fork all the time, cover and leave for around 10 minutes.

Heat the light olive oil or coconut oil in a sauté pan and over a relatively high heat, brown the lamb fillet on all sides before turning down the heat and continuing to cook for a further 5 minutes if you like it pink, 8 minutes if you like it medium and 10 minutes if you like it well-done. Turn the fillet regularly.

Remove the lamb from the pan, spread the nut, seed and spice mix on a board and roll the lamb in it until it is well-coated before wrapping in foil to keep warm.

Fork through the couscous to make sure all the grains are separated before adding the lemon/honey/oil mix and stirring to ensure it is well incorporated.

Place a portion of couscous on each plate, top with the lamb (finely sliced) and arrange the feta, watermelon and watercress around the plate.

NB: The nut, seed and spice mix will keep in the fridge in a sealed jar for a couple of weeks if you choose to make it beforehand or double the quantities and makes a delicious soup, stew, salad and open sandwich topping.