

Romaine Salad with Creamy Garlic Dressing and Roasted Garlic Croutons

CROUTONS

Three loaves French bread, cut crosswise into ½ inch thick slices
¾ cup olive oil
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
¾ cup Roasted Garlic Puree (see below)

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Arrange the slices on a baking sheet. Brush one side of each with the olive oil. Sprinkle with the salt and pepper. Bake until golden brown, about 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool a bit. Spread the croutons with the roasted garlic puree.

ROASTED GARLIC PUREE

12 heads of garlic (about 1 ½ to 1 ¾ lbs)
¼ cup extra virgin oil
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or aluminum foil. Cut the top quarters off each garlic head so the cloves are exposed. Place cut side up on the prepared baking sheet. Drizzle the oil over the garlic and season lightly with the salt and pepper. Turn the garlic cut side down. Roast until the cloves are soft and golden brown, 1 to 1 ¼ hours. Let the garlic cool. Squeeze the soft garlic flesh from each head into a bowl. Mash the flesh with a fork to blend it into a puree. (This could be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.)

CREAMY GARLIC DRESSING

1 cup mayonnaise
½ cup roasted garlic puree
6 tbsp freshly grated Parmesan cheese
4 tbsp heavy cream
2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
½ tsp salt
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Mix the mayonnaise, roasted garlic puree, cheese, heavy cream, and lemon juice in a medium bowl with a rubber spatula. Season with the salt and pepper.

Prepare the lettuce. Tear the larger leaves into bite-size pieces, and leave the smaller, tender leaves whole. Toss in a large bowl with the desired amount of salad dressing. Divide the salad among salad plates and serve with the crouton on the side.

From "Prime Time Emeril"