

Arugula and Sweet Red Pepper Salad

(Serves 10-12)

Ingredients:

3 large heads of leafy green lettuce (Romaine, Spring mix, etc.)
3 bunches of Arugula
24 oz fresh mushrooms
2 large red bell peppers
Balsamic vinaigrette dressing (recipe below)

Directions:

Discard outer leaves of lettuce; separate and rinse (if necessary) the inner leaves and dry thoroughly. Wrap in towel and refrigerate.
Remove arugula leaves from their stems, rinse and dry thoroughly. Wrap and refrigerate.
Remove stems from the mushrooms and discard. Wipe each mushroom cap with a damp cloth or paper towel. Wrap and refrigerate.
Cut away the stems and ribs of the red peppers; discard the seeds.
Slice the peppers into fine julienne. Wrap and refrigerate.

To assemble: tear the lettuce leaves into bite-size pieces and combine with the arugula.
Divide among chilled salad plates. Slice the mushrooms and sprinkle evenly over the greens.
Arrange the red pepper julienne over mushrooms.
Drizzle each plate with Balsamic Vinaigrette and serve immediately.

Balsamic Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

2 garlic cloves, unpeeled
2 tbsp prepared Dijon-style mustard
6 tbsp balsamic vinegar
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
2 cups best quality extra-virgin olive oil

Method:

Cut garlic cloves into halves and rub the cut sides over the inner surface of a small bowl. Reserve the garlic.
Whisk mustard and vinegar together in the bowl. Season with salt and pepper.
Dribble oil into the bowl in a slow, steady stream, whisking constantly, until dressing is creamy and thickened and all the oil has been incorporated.
Taste and correct seasoning.
Add the reserved garlic; cover the bowl and let stand at room temperature till you need it.
Remove garlic and re-whisk the dressing, if necessary, before using. (You may not need it all.)