

**BIBB LETTUCE WITH CREAMY ROASTED GARLIC VINAIGRETTE
AND GOAT CHEESE CROUTONS
SERVES 6**

This fresh, sprightly dish takes a modern approach to the *salade composée*, while remaining true to its distinctly French heritage.

3 shallots
Ice water
12 1/4-inch bread rounds (from about 1/2 12-inch French baguette)
4 ounces chevre (goat) cheese, softened
3 heads of bibb lettuce, cut into quarters, rinsed, and dried
1 recipe creamy roasted garlic vinaigrette. See below.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

While the oven is heating, slice the shallots into thin rings and soak the rings in ice water while you make the croutons. This will soften their flavor and make them appealingly crunchy.

Place the French-bread rounds on a cookie sheet and bake for 3 to 4 minutes, until they are a pale golden color. Remove the croutons from the oven and spread them with the softened goat cheese. Return the croutons to the oven to warm the cheese for 3 to 4 minutes, until the top is lightly browned.

Divide the lettuce wedges equally among 6 chilled salad plates and ladle the dressing over the lettuce. Remove the shallot rings from the ice bath, pat dry with a paper towel, and divide the rings atop the lettuce quarters. Garnish each salad with 2 cheese croutons.

**CREAMY ROASTED GARLIC VINAIGRETTE
MAKES ABOUT 1 1/2 CUPS**

This will keep, chilled in a sealed container, for about one week.

1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
6 garlic cloves, peeled
1/4 cup rice vinegar
1 large egg yolk
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
Salt and freshly ground white pepper to taste

In a small saucepan over low heat, combine the olive oil and garlic. Make sure the garlic cloves are fully submerged. Cook for 8 to 10 minutes, until the cloves are soft and begin to turn a light caramel color. Remove the oil from the heat and allow it to cool to room temperature to be used later in the dressing.

When the garlic and oil have cooled, in a separate bowl combine the rice vinegar, egg yolk, and Dijon mustard and whisk until blended. Remove the garlic cloves from the oil and add the oil to the egg-yolk mixture in a thin, steady stream, whisking continuously to create an emulsion. Chop all of the soft garlic cloves and mash them into a paste. Whisk the garlic paste into the dressing. Chill the dressing until ready to serve.