



ORANGE AND CUCUMBER LAYERED SALAD WITH SHRIMP

Ingredients

Start to finish: 30 minutes

Servings: 2

1 medium naval or cara cara orange (or grapefruit), peeled, sliced, membrane and seeds removed

1 medium blood red orange, peeled, sliced, membrane and seeds removed

1/2 English cucumber, thinly sliced

1/4 medium avocado, sliced

1/4 fennel bulb, core removed, thinly sliced

1/4 small red onion, thinly sliced

1 cup watercress

6 ounces steamed shrimp

1 tablespoon toasted pumpkin seeds (or other nut or seed)

1-2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice or orange juice

2 teaspoons high quality extra virgin olive oil

1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Preparation

Layer the orange slices and cucumber on a platter. Top with the avocado slices, fennel slices, watercress, shrimp and pumpkin seeds. Squeeze the lemon or orange juice over the whole salad, and then drizzle with olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, and fennel fronds, if using. — AP

STUCK FOR A SIDE DISH? GRAB A FEW ORANGES AND ADD TOPPINGS

By Melissa D'arabian

My mom was a wannabe urban farmer long before it was cool. Living in the city limits didn't stop us from growing our own veggies in a backyard garden that flanked a huge handmade chicken coop, where we raised hens for eggs. (I'll take this opportunity to apologize to our neighbors, especially for the year we accidentally acquired a rooster, and the year after when we ended up with 38 clucking egg-layers as a result of said rooster.)

Today, raising your own food is trendy, but back then we did it because it was cheap. As a kid, I remember being sent to the backyard to grab a snack. I'd forego the plethora of fuzzy zucchini, and grab either a tomato or orange. Biting into a sun-warmed fruit, laced with just the tiniest bit of clinging dirt (I never bothered with the hose), sweet juice dripping down my chin in the dry heat of Tucson, Arizona, is a memory stuck in my bones. No surprise oranges and tomatoes were interchangeable snacks, both of them sweet, acidic, and juicy. Turns out, oranges and tomatoes are worthy swaps for each other in a host of raw recipes.

So if you are out of tomatoes, or they are simply out of season, consider using oranges instead, tasty year-round. The additional sweetness is a welcome twist in most recipes - try oranges in your caprese salad - but if you want a less sweet option, use grapefruit, or a combination of cucumber and oranges instead.

When you are stuck for a side dish, grab a few oranges from the fruit basket, slice them up and lay them out on a platter, and add whatever tasty toppings you have on hand - avocado, chopped scallions or shallots, nuts, seeds, fresh herbs, spicy greens, leftover rotisserie chicken, a drizzle of pesto are just a few ideas. Try this week's Orange and Cucumber Layered Salad with Shrimp, but use the ingredient list as a mere suggestion to start your own creative version.