

Jimi's Zucchini and Onion Salad With Fresh Garden Greens

As with most recipes, it is best to use what ingredients you have on hand, substitute and make adjustments as necessary – trust your instincts. I have written the recipe with the exact ingredients, techniques, and presentation I used when first making it, doubtless I will change and improve it over time, so should you. Hope you enjoy it!

Salad base

2-3 medium zucchini
1 large (hot) red onion - (Red Torpedo, Italian Blood Red, Rossa DiMilano, etc.)
Kosher salt

Dressing

~4 T Maharaja curry powder (or equivalent)
~1 T Balti seasoning (a hot, curry-like spice blend - available through Penzeys Spices on-line)
1+ cup olive oil
Juice of 2-3 lemons
Sugar
Kosher Salt
Black Pepper (fresh ground)
Balsamic Vinegar

Greens

Mixed greens, stemmed, washed, spun dry (Arugula, Swiss Chard, and Spinach)

Advance prep: Shred all the zucchini using a box-type grater (large holes). Place shredded zucchini in large, non-reactive bowl (stainless or glass). Salt liberally with kosher salt (~2-3 T) and toss gently but thoroughly with hands. Let stand 1-hourish at room temperature (this draws off un-needed moisture and intensifies the flavor of the zucchini). While zucchini is sitting, place the curry powders in a large skillet on a medium-low heat stirring occasionally until it just begins to smoke then add 1+ cup of olive oil and continue heating and stirring every once in a while for 10-20 minutes. Turn off heat, let cool a bit, and strain with a fine sieve. Let oil cool completely (if your not using the curry infused olive oil right away, just leave all in the pan until your ready to continue then strain - the longer it infuses, the better). While waiting for the infusion to finish cooking and cooling, juice the lemons and put aside, slice the onions in half along the meridian, place cut-side down, and finely slice across the grain very, very thin. Put the salted zucchini in a tea towel and, drawing all the sides of the towel up, wring it out until most of the water is squeezed-out. Return zucchini to the large bowl; add the onions and fluff with your hands.

Dressing: In a medium bowl, add all the lemon juice. Slowly add the strained curry oil in a small stream while whisking briskly until all the oil has been added. Continue to whisk vigorously until well emulsified (~1 minute). Add sugar until it tastes sweet (2-4 T) and stir well. Add salt until it tastes a little salty (1-2 t.) and stir well. Add a lot of fresh ground, black pepper (2-3 t.) and stir well. Taste and adjust salt or sugar if you think it needs it, it should be a little on the sweet side though very piquant and peppery. Put about 1/3 cup of dressing on the zucchini/onion mixture and toss with hands to thoroughly coat. Splash about 2-3 T balsamic vinegar on the zucchini/onion mixture and toss. Set aside for an hour or refrigerate for up to 24 hours.

Assembly: Just before serving, place prepared greens in very large bowl and slop-on remaining dressing; do not toss more than just a couple of quick strokes. Fluff the zucchini mixture and schlop the whole mess onto one side of the greens and mix with just a few quick strokes (there should be plenty of lightly dressed greens on one side of the bowl and dressed zucchini/onion mixture on the other). To serve, use a tongs and grab a nice bunch of sloppy zucchini/onion mixture and put it on top of a nice bunch of lightly dressed greens, release and grab the whole mess and place on a plate. Adjust zucchini/greens mixture and dressing amount according to taste. Enjoy!

Source: James Cassidy