

Salad in the Round with buttered agave walnuts

I had fun playing with the shapes and colors in this recipe. I was going to call it 1980s Bat Mitzvah Salad since every girl I knew who had a Bat Mitzvah in the 80s had a pink-and-green themed party, but I'm going with Salad in the Round instead. I like the way the radishes and cucumbers echo each other shapewise. Those of you celebrating Easter this weekend might like the spring colors as well.

Serves 2 as a lunch salad, 4 as a side

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 tablespoon agave nectar
1 cup walnut halves
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
4 generous handfuls (about 4 packed cups) mixed baby greens (I used mesclun, baby spinach, and baby arugula)
4 pretty radishes, sliced
1 Persian cucumber (a slender, narrow variety -- by all means, substitute any cucumber), sliced
Handful of mint leaves

For the vinaigrette: 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil (plus more for drizzling), 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar, 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard, 1 teaspoon agave nectar, sea salt and black pepper

Line a baking sheet with parchment or a silicone liner.

Warm the butter and 1 tablespoon agave in a small, nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. When the butter melts and foams, add the walnuts and salt. Shake the skillet to coat the nuts well. Let the liquid bubble and the nuts toast, tossing a few times, about 3 minutes. Scrape onto the lined baking sheet to cool.

Combine the greens, vegetables, and mint leaves in a salad bowl or on a large platter. Scatter with the walnuts. Shake the vinaigrette ingredients in a small jar, or whisk until emulsified. Pour over the salad, toss, and serve. Refresh with a final drizzle of olive oil, in case it's thirsty.