

Chef from the Hood Recipes



Chef:
Thaddeus Palmese

Restaurant:
Starlight Wine Bar

Recipe:
Faro Salad!



Starlight's Sonoma Fall Salad with Sebastopol Apples, Pt. Reyes Blue & sweet-spiced Candied Walnuts!

From Starlight's Chef Thaddeus Palmese comes this satisfying salad that uses mostly local and organic ingredients. Very similar to a classic Waldorf Salad, this version employs a dressing made with ver jus (a product made in Geyserville from unfermented wine grapes during the fall crush). Local organic apples and that fabulous Point Reyes Blue Cheese make this old-fashioned favorite even better. This recipe serves 4.

Ingredients:

Salad

- 4 to 6 handfuls of organic baby greens (escarole, red belgium endive, frisee, red oak, lolla rosa, baby lettuce mix well)
- 2 to 3 Sebastopol organic apples (Sleeping Beauty, Jonathan or Fuji cored and sliced, leave peel on for nice color)
- Starlight's dressing (recipe below)
- 1.5 cups candied walnuts (recipe below)
- 4 ounces Point Reyes Blue Cheese (a fabulous local blue cheese found at Fiesta/Pacific cheese department)

Dressing

- 2/3 cup mild olive oil or grapeseed oil (Asti)
- 2/3 cup ver jus (Starlight chefs use Terr Sonoma Ver Jus, which is grape juice squeezed from unfermented wine grapes. Because ver jus has no acidity, it allows for a dressing that will not compete with wine, an important feature for a wine bar!)
- 1 teaspoon grainy or Dijon mustard (Maille)
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- salt (Sea Star) and fresh black pepper to taste

To prepare Salad:

Gently toss greens in a large bowl with just enough dressing to lightly coat. Divide salad among 4 plates. Toss apple slices with ver jus (or orange juice). Arrange apples, cheese and walnuts on each salad and serve!

To prepare dressing:

Mix all the ingredients together. Makes 1.5 cups of dressing. Extra dressing keeps in refrigerator about a week.

Candied Walnuts

Ingredients:

- 1/2 stick of butter (Clover)
- 1/3 cup of dark brown sugar (Hain)
- 1.5 cups of walnuts (Pacific Palate)
- 1 teaspoon ancho chili powder (Los Chileros)
- 1 splash of ver jus (see note below)
- sea salt (Sea Star) & fresh ground black pepper (to taste)

To prepare walnuts:

In a wide sauté pan stir butter with brown sugar over a low flame. When sugar melts add walnuts, tossing to coat with butter and sugar. Continue to stir for a few minutes, being sure to flip the walnuts often in the pan so that they do not burn. Turn heat off, and stir in chili powder, salt & pepper. Taste, adding more if you like. Pour candied nuts onto a silpat sheet or piece of parchment paper, and separate them from each other. Let them cool and harden, nibble a few as you add them to your salad.