

Roasted Squash and Gingerbread Panzanella

Makes 6-8 Servings

Recipe adapted from Shannon Walker, Preservationist and Beekeeper, Blackberry Farm.

An all-time favorite at Blackberry Farm, this salad is a staple on the menu throughout the fall. The gingerbread is sweetened with sorghum syrup, made from a grain native to Tennessee. If unavailable, molasses makes a fine substitute. You will not use all of the gingerbread for this recipe. Leftovers are delicious as a snack or dessert, topped with a scoop of vanilla ice cream or a dollop of crème fraîche.

Ingredients:

For the gingerbread:

Melted unsalted butter for brushing, plus 8 Tbs. (1 stick/125 g) butter, at room temperature
1 1/2 cups (375 ml) boiling water
1 cup (345 g) sorghum syrup or molasses
1 tsp. baking soda
2 1/2 cups (390 g) all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
2 tsp. ground ginger
1 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
Pinch of ground cloves
1 cup (220 g) firmly packed dark brown sugar
1 egg

For the Salad:

3 cups (90 g) arugula
4 oz. (125 g) slab bacon or thick-cut bacon, cut into pieces 1/4 inch (6mm) thick (lardons), and fried until crispy
1/2 cup (60 g) drained and sliced Blackberry Farm pickled ramps or pickled pearl onions
3 Tbs. Blackberry Farm pumpkin and pear butter
3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
2 cups (315 g) sliced or diced acorn squash, roasted

Directions:

To make the gingerbread, preheat an oven to 325°F (165°C). Brush a half-sheet pan with melted butter. In a bowl, whisk together the boiling water, sorghum syrup and baking soda. In another bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, ginger, cinnamon and cloves. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the flat beater, beat the 8 Tbs. butter on medium speed for 30 seconds. Add the brown sugar and beat until fluffy, about 2 minutes, stopping the mixer occasionally to scrape down the sides of the bowl. Add the egg and beat until combined. Reduce the speed to low and add half the sorghum mixture, then half the flour mixture, beating after each addition until just combined and stopping the mixer to scrape down the bowl as needed. Repeat to add the remaining ingredients. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake until the gingerbread springs back when touched, about 20 minutes. Transfer the pan to a wire rack and let cool completely. The gingerbread can be made up to 2 days in advance. For the salad, cut enough gingerbread into 1-inch (2.5-cm) cubes to measure 2 cups (125 g). Increase the oven temperature to 400°F (200°C). Place the gingerbread cubes on a baking sheet. Toast, turning once, until slightly crisped, 7 to 8 minutes. Let cool. In a large bowl, combine the gingerbread croutons, arugula, lardons and pickled ramps. In a small bowl, whisk the pumpkin and pear butter and the 3 Tbs. olive oil. Add to the salad and toss with your hands to ensure the croutons and arugula are well coated, adding more olive oil, salt and pepper as needed. Divide among individual plates and top with the squash. Serve immediately.

-OurLocaltopia 2013-



www.ourlocaltopia.com