Bulgur Salad w/ Spinach, Roasted Tomatoes & Feta

Serves 4 to 6 | Active Time: 45 minutes | Total Time: 1 hour 20 minutes

Step 1: Roasting the Tomatoes

- 2 cups cherry tomatoes (1 pint)
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp Harissa Paste
- 1 to 2 tsp dark brown sugar

Preheat your oven to 250°F (120°C).

Line a tray with parchment. Cut the tomatoes in half width-wise (they just look prettier this way) and place them onto the tray cut-side up.

Mix the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, harissa, and brown sugar together in a small bowl. Whisk to emulsify the mixture a bit as this will help it to stick to the tomatoes better. Spoon the mixture over the tomatoes.

Transfer to the oven and slow roast for approximately 2 hours or until the tomatoes have just started to brown, shrivel, and concentrate. You still want them to be a bit meaty and juicy.

Note: If you are short on time, you can turn the oven up to 300°F to roast the tomatoes but just note that they will likely be a bit less juicy, given the higher heat.

Step 2: Preparing the Caramelized Onions

- 2 large, yellow onions
- 2 tbsp grapeseed oil
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 1/2 tsp brown sugar
- juice of 1/2 fresh lemon
- 1/4 tsp sea salt, or to taste
- 1/4 freshly ground black pepper. or to taste

To prepare the onions, peel and then cut them vertically into thin slices.

Heat a large, stainless-steel pan over medium-high heat. Once hot, add the oil, followed by the onions and a pinch of salt.

Cook the onions for approximately 10 to 15 minutes, or until they are golden brown in color. If the onions seem to stick at any point, deglaze the pan with a touch of water. Once the onions are golden brown, add the cinnamon and brown sugar and stir to combine. Once the sugar melts and begins to caramelize, add the lemon juice. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Step 3: Making the Pilaf

- 1 1/2 cup finely diced onion
- 1 tbsp minced garlic (approx. 2 cloves)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup coarse bulgur wheat
- 1 1/2 cups stock*
- 1/2 tsp sea salt, or to taste
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper, or taste

To make the pilaf, heat a sauté pan over medium heat, once hot, add the oil, followed by the onions. Cook the onions for 5 minutes or so, or until they are soft and translucent.

Next, add the garlic and cook for about 30 seconds or so until aromatic. Next, add the bulgur wheat and toast for a few minutes to coat with the oil. Add the stock and bring everything to a boil. Reduce the heat, cover, and let simmer for about 15 minutes or so. Once done, remove from the heat and let rest for about 10 minutes.

After the pilaf has rested, remove the lid and let the bulgur cool off a bit before assembling the salad.

Step 4: Assembling the Dish

- 1 cup Vegan Feta Cheese
- 10 oz (284 gr) fresh baby spinach*
- extra-virgin olive oil (as needed)
- 1/4 tsp sea salt, or to taste
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper, or to taste
- juice of 1/2 a lemon

To start, be sure you have your Feta Cheese made before you begin assembling the salad.

For the spinach, if the stems seem quite big, remove them first. Also, note that arugula can also be used instead of spinach or you can use half spinach and half arugula.

Next, toss the spinach with a light drizzling of olive oil and gently toss to coat the leaves in the oil. Next, add a tablespoon or so of lemon juice as well as a bit of salt and pepper, and then toss again — taste for seasoning.

To assemble the salad, place alternate layers of spinach, grains, and a bit of feta on each plate. Top with the onions, roasted tomatoes, and a bit more feta. This salad can either be served on individual plates or it can be served family-style on a big platter.