



GRILLED ZUCCHINI SALAD WITH SEA SALT AND LEMON ZEST

MAKES 4 SIDE-DISH SERVINGS

THERE'S A REAL SKILL TO PERFECTLY GRILLING ZUCCHINI, EGGPLANT AND SUMMER SQUASH—A SECOND TOO LONG AND YOU HAVE A MUSHY PIECE OF WE DON'T KNOW WHAT. THE KEY IS TO REMEMBER THAT, JUST LIKE A STEAK OR PIECE OF FISH, VEGETABLES KEEP COOKING AFTER THEY ARE REMOVED FROM THE HEAT SOURCE. SO IT'S IMPORTANT TO GET THEM OFF THE FIRE EARLY ENOUGH.

MAKE SURE NOT TO OVER-OIL VEGETABLES BEFORE YOU GRILL THEM. ZUCCHINI ABSORBS OIL, AND TOO MUCH WOULD MAKE THE SALAD GREASY OR THE OIL COULD DRIP AND CAUSE A FLARE-UP. WHEN YOU HAVE A FLARE-UP, SOOT, OR CARBON, ENVELOPS THE FOOD, LEAVING A BITTER TASTE IN YOUR MOUTH.

2 tbsp/30ml olive oil

2 medium-size zucchini, ends removed, sliced lengthwise ½"/13mm thick

Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper, to taste

Juice of 2 lemons

2 tbsp/20g slivered almonds, toasted

2 tbsp/10g roughly chopped parsley

5 basil leaves, roughly chopped

4 mint leaves, roughly chopped

1 tbsp/15ml grated Parmesan cheese

Coarse sea salt, for serving

Build a medium direct fire. Spread an even layer of unlit charcoal in the bottom of the grill. Fill a chimney halfway with charcoal. Stuff two sheets of newspaper in the bottom of the chimney and light it. When the coals are fully engaged—you should see flames peeking over the top—pour them over the unlit charcoal. If using a gas grill, light the gas and adjust the temperature on both sides to medium.

Lightly oil the zucchini and season with salt and pepper.

When you can hold your hands over the fire for no more than 5 to 8 seconds, clean the grill grate. Place the zucchini on the grill and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Flip and cook for 2 to 3 minutes more, until it is golden brown and the zucchini is firm but you can bend it with tongs. Remove from the heat and place on a cutting board.

Slice the zucchini crosswise about ¼ inch/6mm thick and place in a bowl. Add the remaining ingredients to the zucchini and toss very gently to combine. Sprinkle sea salt over the salad and serve immediately or set aside at room temperature until serving time.



THAI-FLAVORED PORK BELLY SKEWERS

MAKES 10 SKEWERS, 4 TO 6 APPETIZER SERVINGS

WE FOUND THAT GRILLING THESE OVER A LOW GRILL HELPS BUILD A WONDERFUL STICKY-CRUNCHY TEXTURE. BE SURE TO FLIP THE SKEWERS OVER EVERY 30 TO 45 SECONDS. SOAKING THE SKEWERS IN WATER HELPS KEEP THEM FROM BURNING.

1 cup/240ml water

½ cup/90g brown sugar

1 stalk lemongrass, thinly sliced

2 pieces star anise

2"/5cm cinnamon stick

2 tsp/4g coriander seeds, toasted and ground

2 tsp/4g red pepper flakes

¼ cup/60ml soy sauce

2 tsp/30ml fish sauce

2 tbsp/30ml white vinegar

1 lb/450g pork belly, skin removed, cut into 1"/2.5cm square slices, each ¼"/6mm thick

10 scallions, thick white part cut into 1"/2.5cm pieces

Equipment: Ten 8"/20cm wooden skewers, soaked in water for at least 4 hours

In a small saucepan over high heat, bring to a boil the water, brown sugar, lemongrass, star anise, cinnamon stick, coriander and red pepper flakes. Boil for 30 seconds, then remove from the heat and transfer to a bowl. Cover and refrigerate until completely cool, about 2 hours. Add the soy and fish sauces and vinegar and stir.

Place the pork belly chunks in the marinade for at least 4 and up to 24 hours.

Thread the pork belly and scallion alternately onto the skewers, starting with the pork belly (the scallion should be perpendicular to the skewers). Each skewer should have 3 pieces of pork and 2 scallions.

Build a low direct fire. Spread an even layer of unlit charcoal in the bottom of the grill. Fill a chimney one-third full with charcoal. Stuff two sheets of newspaper in the bottom of the chimney and light it. When the coals are fully engaged—you should see flames peeking over the top—pour them over the unlit charcoal. If using a gas grill, light the gas and adjust the temperature on both sides to low.

When you can hold your hands over the fire for no more than 8 to 10 seconds, clean the grill grate. Place the skewers directly over the fire, with the exposed wooden ends pointing to the edge of the grill, and grill for 30 to 45 seconds, until the meat starts to brown. Flip the skewers over and repeat. Continue this process for about 4 minutes, until the meat is dark brown, almost black in some areas.

Serve hot, and make sure you get one for yourself. These will not last long.