

French Caviar Lentil, Arugula & Celery Root Salad

Serves 4-6

In this delicious winter salad from Gayle Pirie at Foreign Cinema in San Francisco, the lentils delicately coat the greens. The dish will make 4-5 cups lentils, enough for leftovers to use in the Seared Fish with Glazed Lentils & Root Vegetables (recipe at sfgate.com/food) or the Warm Lentil Dinner Salad, below.

The lentils

- 1½ cups French caviar, or du Puy, lentils
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 small carrot, peeled
- 1 small piece celery stick
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt, or more to taste
- 1 to 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil (optional) + more for drizzling

The salad

- ½ cup pecan halves
- 1 small head celery root
- ½ pound loose arugula leaves, or three bundles of bunches arugula, cleaned and dried
- 3 ounces fromage blanc, crumbled

The vinaigrette

- 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar
- 1½ teaspoons red wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons honey
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt + more to taste
- 6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Pepper, to taste

For the lentils: Place the lentils in a small stainless steel pot and add 3 cups cold water. Add the bay leaf, carrot, celery, salt and olive oil, if using, and bring to a simmer over medium heat. When the mixture comes to a light boil, reduce heat to low and cook uncovered for approximately 30-35 minutes, stirring a few



CRAIG LEE / *The Chronicle*; styled by VICTORIA MCGINLEY

times to ensure even cooking. The lentils should be firm but not crunchy, and the interior should be smooth. Check the lentils as they cook to make sure they do not dry out — depending on the lentils you buy, they may cook differently and require a little extra water.

Once the lentils are cooked, place in a storage container and allow to cool. Drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil, and adjust the seasonings to taste.

For the salad: Preheat the oven to 400°. Scatter the pecan halves on a baking sheet and bake for 8-10 minutes, or until the nuts are fragrant but not too dark. Allow to cool.

Meanwhile, peel the celery root and rinse under cold water. Pat dry with a paper towel. Slice into ½-inch thick planks, then slice the planks into ½-inch wide matchsticks. If the sticks are long, they

can be cut in half. Cut roughly ½ cup of sticks.

For the vinaigrette: Combine the vinegars, honey and salt in a small bowl. Whisk in the olive oil slowly, until the dressing is thick and emulsified. Season the dressing to taste with salt and pepper.

To assemble the salad: Drain the lentils of any excess moisture. Combine the arugula and celery root sticks in a large bowl. Toss slightly, add the vinaigrette and ¾ cup of the cooked lentils, and toss again until thoroughly combined. Divide the salad equally among the serving plates, and garnish each portion with the toasted pecans and fromage blanc.

Per serving: 265 calories, 6 g protein, 15 g carbohydrate, 22 g fat (3 g saturated), 5 mg cholesterol, 244 mg sodium, 4 g fiber.