

TO VEGETABLES
with love

Broccoli, date and pistachio salad

© Hetty Lui McKinnon for To Vegetables, With Love

If you like, you could skip the quick cook and use the broccoli raw (like I do in my NYT Cooking recipe) but I quite like the sweetness that comes from a quick toss in the pan.

If you don't have dates, you could go for dried fruit like raisins (sultanas), apricots, cranberries or figs – I would soak them in a couple tablespoons of water, orange juice or 1 part vinegar mixed with 3 parts water to rehydrate them and make them plump and juicy.

Serves 4

600g (21-ounces) broccoli
extra virgin olive oil
sea salt and black pepper
1 x 425g tin cannellini beans or chickpeas, drained (drained weight 250g)
1/3 cup (80g) toasted pistachios or almonds, roughly chopped
12 regular dates or 6 medjool dates, pitted and torn
handful chopped coriander/cilantro leaves
handful mint leaves

Spiced vinaigrette

2 teaspoon ras el hanout, baharat or curry powder (or a single spice like ground cumin, coriander, turmeric)
2 tablespoons white wine or champagne vinegar
1/4 cup (60ml) extra virgin olive oil
1 small shallot (eschalot), thinly sliced
1 clove garlic, finely grated
1 tablespoon maple syrup
1/4 - 1/2 teaspoon red chilli/pepper flakes
1/2 teaspoon sea salt

In a bowl, combine the as el hanout, baharat or curry powder, vinegar, olive oil, shallot, garlic, maple syrup, red chilli/pepper flakes and salt. Stir to combine. Set aside to allow the shallots to soften.

Finely chop the broccoli flowers. Remove the woody exterior of the stalk and then finely chop it and add to the rest of the broccoli.

Heat a large frying pan (skillet) on medium high for 2 minutes. When hot, drizzle with olive oil and add the broccoli, season with 1/2 teaspoon of salt and lots of black pepper and toss for 2 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl.

To the broccoli, add the beans or chickpeas, pistachio, and dates. Add the dressing and toss to evenly distribute. Add the herbs, season with salt and black pepper and toss again.

Storage: The salad can be prepped ahead and stored in the fridge for up to 5 days.