

TO VEGETABLES
with love

Shaved brussels sprouts, orange and feta salad with pecan crumbs

© Hetty Lui McKinnon for To Vegetables, With Love

There are many ways to adapt this salad. I'm thinking you could roast your sprouts if you prefer a salad that is not raw. The oranges could be substituted with a stone fruit if you are somewhere where peaches, plums or nectarines are available. Pomelo would work too. If feta is not your thing, try a salty hard cheese like shaved parmesan or pecorino; shards of gruyere would be nice too. Make it vegan by using vegan feta or omitting the feta altogether and subbing in salty olives.

The salad is rounded out by the earthy, licorice notes of tarragon leaves; I don't often pick up tarragon at the store but it was a lovely surprise in this no-cook salad. If you cannot find tarragon, that is fine, substitute with another herb – I'm thinking basil or parsley would work nicely.

The pecan crumbs are not to be missed. The nuts are ground up with smoky spices, making a wonderful salad topper. Keep this recipe on hand to make with other nuts. Make sure your pecans are roasted as this will make the crumbs much more flavorful.

Serves 4, a light meal or many more as a side

Smoky pecan crumbs

50g (1/2 cup) toasted pecans
1/2 teaspoon garlic or onion powder
1 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon garam masala or ground coriander
1/4 teaspoon kashmiri chili powder (or other mild chili powder)
1/2 teaspoon salt

Salad

450g (1 pound) Brussels sprouts, thinly sliced
2 oranges 600g, peel and pith removed (keep any juice)
Handful tarragon or parsley leaves
170g (6 oz) Greek feta, crumbled

Mustard Seed and Maple dressing

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon mustard seeds
1 clove garlic, grated

1 tablespoon white or red wine vinegar (I used champagne vinegar)
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon maple syrup

In a small blender (I use my NutriBullet), add the pecans, garlic or onion powder, paprika, garam masala or ground coriander, chili powder and salt. Blitz for 2-3 seconds (or pulse 2-3 times) until the nuts are ground into a coarse powder.

In a bowl, whisk together the olive oil, mustard seeds, garlic, vinegar, salt and maple syrup.

Slice the oranges into segments, keeping all the juice.

In a large bowl, add the Brussels sprouts, oranges (and their juice), feta, tarragon or parsley and the dressing. Toss to combine. Season with black pepper and sea salt. To serve, top with smoky pecan crumbs.

This can be made up to 4 hours ahead and kept at room temperature. The burgled sprouts will further soften in this time. Top with pecan crumbs only when ready to eat.

TIP: To toast pecans: roast pecans in a 300°F / 150°C oven for 7-8 minutes. Allow to cool before using.