

Greens with Dried Apricots and Hazelnuts

Lacinato Kale is in the works tonight and it's cooked in a tangy sauce with dried apricots. The greens are topped with sliced Chickenless tenders and the special umami of toasted hazelnuts.

Hazelnuts are also known as Filberts. (You remember Aunt Hazel and Uncle Filbert? There was no question they were both nuts, but they had great taste!)

Preparation time: 40 minutes - Serves: 2

Organize Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Prep and organize ingredients on small plates or in bowls. Once everything is prepped and organized, cooking is a lot more fun.

Bulgur and Hazelnuts

1 C. dry bulgur
2 C. water
1/2 tsp. salt

1/3 C. hazelnuts

Sautéed Kale

1 tsp. olive oil
1-1/2 C. low-sodium vegetable broth
1 tsp. low-sodium soy sauce or tamari
2 T. balsamic vinegar
2 cloves garlic (smashed and chopped)
1/2 C. chopped- yellow onion
1 large bunch Lacinato kale (washed, stems and leaves chopped separately)

1/3 C. dried apricots (chopped into 1/4" pieces)

Plant-based Choice or Chicken Option

Plant-based Choice:

4 chickenless tenders (or equivalent product)

Chicken Option:

1 skinless, boneless chicken breast
1 tsp. olive oil
1/2 C. white wine

Preheat Oven
to 400°

Let's Prepare, Cook, and Plate This!

Bulgur and Hazelnuts

Start by putting bulgur on to cook. Bring bulgur, water and salt to a hard boil. Turn off heat, leave on burner, cover and set aside until ready to dine. (It's really that simple.)

Toast whole hazelnuts in oven 4 minutes at 400°. Stay with them and roll them around during toasting so the skins turn dark brown. Let cool and rub briskly between your palms to remove loose, charred skins. Reserve 6 whole nuts and cut them in half. Coarsely chop the remaining nuts.

Plant-based Choice or Chicken Option

Plant-based Choice:

Place 4 chickenless tenders on a lightly-oiled cookie sheet and bake 15 minutes at 375°. Turn once. Allow to cool and slice.

Chicken Option:

Brown chicken breast in oil. Add white wine, reduce heat to medium-low, cover and cook 5 minutes per side. Allow to cool and slice.

Sautéed Kale

Measure oil, broth, soy sauce and vinegar into a large, deep saucepan or soup kettle. Add garlic, onions and chopped kale stems. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium. Cook 12 minutes.

Drop chopped kale leaves and chopped apricots into pan and toss another 4 minutes. After 4 minutes, stir in halved nuts. Remove from heat.

Plate the Meal

1. Press 2/3 C. cooked bulgur into a ladle or small bowl to shape. Drop shaped mounds in the center of each serving plate.
2. Divide greens over and around mound of bulgur.
3. Drizzle a few tablespoons of leftover cooking liquid over quinoa on each plate.
4. Arrange tenders or optional sliced chicken over greens and bulgur.
5. Garnish each serving with the remaining chopped hazelnuts.

What I've Learned from this Recipe

It's important not to add the apricots too early. The meal is more successful if the dried apricots retain some firmness. Holding the toasted, chopped nuts as a garnish guarantees a nice crunch and preserves their rich "meaty" flavor.

Let us know what you think, and ask any questions you may have! chezdon@plate6.com