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Strawberry Salad with Lacy Nib Cookies

Makes 4 side salads and a whole lot of cookies

We admit that this salad is a bit of a guilty pleasure – after all, there are cookies in it! – but we're firm believers that chocolate has a place in the center of the plate. We love the contrast of the sweet, crunchy cookies with the sharp dressing, tender strawberries, and tangy goat cheese. Note that this recipe makes a lot of Lacy Nibs, but any fewer and the batter would be too difficult to mix. They're so delicious through, you'll be glad to have extra to snack on. This dish would be supersweet for a special Valentine's meal.

The cookies tend to get soft and chewy in just a few hours, so rather than baking more than you need, store the leftover batter in the refrigerator for up to one week, and bake the cookies for snacking or for salad as you need them

For the cookies:

3-1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
1/2 cup packed (3-1/2 ounces) dark brown sugar
2 tablespoons whole milk
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
1-1/2 teaspoons cocoa powder
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 cup (2 ounces) Theo roasted cocoa nibs

For the salad:

1 tablespoon raspberry vinegar
1-1/2 teaspoons finely minced shallot
1-1/2 teaspoons honey
1/8 teaspoon kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
6 cups mixed greens
1 cup sliced strawberries
2 ounces crumbled fresh goat cheese

1. To make the cookies, preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the butter and brown sugar together on medium speed until smooth. Scrape down the sides of the bowl, add the milk, and blend until smooth. Add the flour, cocoa powder, and salt, and mix well. Fold in the cocoa nibs.

Continued on Page 2



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Page 2, Strawberry Salad with Lacy Nib Cookies continued

3. Using a 1/2 teaspoon measuring spoon (yes, so tiny!) drop the batter onto the prepared baking sheet, 3 inches apart. Bake until the entire surface of each cookie is bubbling, about 7 minutes. It's perfectly fine if they run together – you can snap them into smaller shards for serving. Let the cookies cool completely before removing them from the parchment paper.

4. To make the salad, in a large bowl whisk together the vinegar, shallot, honey, salt, and pepper to taste. Whisk in the olive oil. Add the greens and toss to coat the leaves with dressing. Add the strawberries and toss again.

5. To serve, divide the salad among 4 small plates. Top each salad with a quarter of the goat cheese and 3 of the cookies. Serve immediately.