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Apple, Pomegranate, Kale Salad

Serves 6 -8

Did someone say warm, fall salad? Yes, please! In this recipe, we highlight delicious fall produce like crunchy apples, hearty kale, and tart pomegranates. Paired with earthy Gorgonzola, and tangy dried apricots, this beauty is topped with sweet and spicy pecans -- a garnish so good you'll need to make a double batch!

Salad Ingredients:

2 bunches Lacinato kale leaves, torn into pieces
1 bunch green kale, torn into pieces
1/4 teaspoon Kosher salt
1 tablespoon olive oil
3/4 cup pomegranate arils (or 1 pomegranate)
1 Honeycrisp apple, cored and thinly sliced
1 Granny Smith apple, cored and thinly sliced
1/2 cup Gorgonzola cheese, crumbled
10 dried apricots, sliced

Dressing Ingredients:

1/3 cup olive oil
1 shallot, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
1/2 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1/2 tablespoon maple syrup
1/4 teaspoon Kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Sweet and Spicy Pecans:

2 tablespoons butter, melted
1/4 teaspoon cayenne
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon Kosher salt
1 cup unsalted pecan halves

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 275°F. Combine the butter, cayenne, cinnamon, brown sugar, and salt in a medium bowl. Add the pecans and toss to coat. Spread the mixture on a parchment-lined baking sheet and bake for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the nuts are browned. Remove from heat and let cool. (Store any leftover pecans in a dry, airtight container for up to 2 weeks.)
2. Meanwhile, add the kale to a large salad bowl. Sprinkle with the salt and olive oil and massage with your hands for 2-3 minutes until the kale pieces start to become tender.
3. Make the dressing by heating the olive oil in a medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add the sliced shallots and cook for 2-3 minutes until softened. Remove from heat.
4. Whisk together the remaining dressing ingredients. Pour in the olive oil and shallot into the dressing and stir.
5. Drizzle half of the the dressing on the kale and use tongs to toss. Arrange the pomegranate arils, apples, Gorgonzola cheese, and dried apricots on top of the salad. Drizzle the salad with the remaining dressing and top with the sweet and spicy pecans. Serve immediately.