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Cynthia David - Special to The Star

Kale, Blood Orange & Squash Salad

This fresh, hearty winter salad, adapted from Sunkist, shows off the sweet-tart flavour of blood oranges. Use leftover dressing on any green or fruit salad or to marinate chicken.

Citrus Dressing:

½ cup (125 mL) fresh blood orange juice	¼ cup (60 mL) extra virgin olive oil
3 tbsp fresh lemon juice	1 tsp (5 mL) sea salt
2 tbsp (30 mL) red wine vinegar	½ tsp (2 mL) freshly ground pepper
1 small clove garlic, pressed	

Salad:

½ cup (125 mL) toasted walnut halves
1 tbsp (15 mL) butter
1 tbsp (15 mL) olive oil
2 cups (500 mL) butternut squash cubes, cut 1-inch (2.5 cm) thick
6 cups (1.5L) packed chopped kale leaves (thick stems discarded)
2 blood oranges, peeled, seeded, each cut into 6 circles
3 tbsp (45 mL) pomegranate seeds (optional)

In small bowl, whisk together orange and lemon juice, red wine vinegar, garlic, salt and pepper. Slowly whisk in olive oil and set aside.

To toast walnuts, heat large non-stick skillet over medium-high. Add nuts and cook, stirring often, until they are fragrant, about 5 minutes. Set aside.

In same skillet, melt butter and olive oil over medium heat. Add squash and cook about 8 minutes, turning occasionally, until golden and just tender.

For salad, in large bowl add kale, cooked squash and walnuts. Toss with just enough dressing to moisten leaves.

Divide among four plates and decorate each with four orange circles and pomegranate seeds.

Makes 4 servings.

Note: You can also cook thin curved slices of squash for garnish, shown in photo, cut from the hollowed-out bottom of the butternut squash.

Chef's tip: To make citrus circles, slice off the top and bottom of each orange to reveal the flesh. Set on cutting board and place a sharp paring knife between the peel and the flesh at the top. Gently cut down, following the curve of the fruit and removing all white pith as you go. Cut into circles horizontally, removing any pits.