



Cannellini Bean, Winter Roots, Broccoli and Mushroom Salad With Meyer Lemon Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

For the Beans:

- 16 oz. cooked legumes of your choice. You can use canned, cooked from dry or fresh in season. All work well with canned being the best on the fly with a guaranteed texture. I am going to use organic cannellini beans.
- 3 oz. minced onions of your choice. Red onion or shallots are my preference year-round, but scallions, sweet onions or fresh spring onions are also great!
- 2 cloves of garlic. I am a bit more rigid on this with a strong preference for whole, fresh garlic, minced as needed. You can use pre-peeled, but I would avoid pre-minced or powdered, as the flavor will impact the beans negatively.
- 1 stalk celery or fennel diced the size of beans. I love both with a preference for fennel for its anise flavor. I also have a hard time committing to a whole stalk of celery.
- ½ cup chopped parsley. I generally use flat Italian parsley, but curly is just as good. Rinse well to remove sand and chop roughly.
- 1 fresh lemon, zest and juice. You can substitute lime or good red vinegar for the lemon. Today I am using a Meyer lemon, which is slightly sweeter than a regular lemon.
- 1 tsp. of fresh black pepper, cumin and coriander, ground with a mortar and pestle. For me, fresh spices are key to lift an ordinary dish into the extraordinary.
- 2 oz. good olive oil. You can substitute avocado oil or hemp oil here, but I love the fruitiness of a good olive oil.

Method:

This is super easy if you choose to use prepared beans. Nothing wrong with this. I use them all the time. If you are a bit more proactive, you can soak the beans overnight and cook in water until tender. This is a two-day process, making it a lot less convenient. For the purists, take advantage of shelling bean season in the early summer and cook them fresh. Cranberry beans or black eyed peas are most common. Once you have the beans, add the ingredients and mix to incorporate. I like to let this mixture sit for 30 minutes to give the flavors time to come together. For this reason, the beans are awesome for a dinner party when you want something delicious that benefits from preparing ahead of time.

For the Salad:

Though the beans above are perfect on their own as a side dish to a larger meal, they are too dense and one dimensional to serve as the complete dish. The second component to this dish are the vegetables. Equally as flexible to access, season and budget as the first. Because it is winter at the moment, we will lean into roots. In just a few months, peas, asparagus, baby carrots and turnips will begin to appear at the market. But for now, let's celebrate what is available.

Ingredients:

- 1lb. winter broccoli. This can be substituted for any green, dense vegetable like the spring veggies listed above, summer squashes, green beans, autumn brussels, cabbages, etc. I like to blanch the vegetables in boiling salted water so they are clean and bright. You can also roast or grill depending on preference and taste.
- ½ lb. winter roots. Turnips, salsify, burdock, celery root, kohlrabi, carrots and beets are all great options. I have some turnips, beets and purple carrots in my winter garden, so we will use those today. Roots generally do better roasted. Depending on time, you can do either. We will roast today.
- 1lb. local, organic lettuces. As with the above, these will change throughout the year. Winter is the time of kales, chicory and cabbages. Today we will use some young escarole, radicchio and kale. Wash the lettuce well and cut to preference. With hardier lettuce, I like to cut them smaller. In the spring and summer, the lettuces are more tender and can be left whole. Make sure to use a salad spinner to dry leaves.
- 4oz. mushrooms. I love mushrooms year-round, but the winter months are the time to really take advantage of them. Use whatever is available. I love beech mushrooms, but the humble button is just fine. Mushrooms are so simple to cook. 1 oz. olive oil in a hot pan. Cook until tender with a little salt.

Meyer Lemon Vinaigrette:

I am using Meyer lemon, but any lemon or good vinegar will do just fine. Once you make this vinaigrette, you can build any vinaigrette dressing.

- 1 Meyer lemon, zest and juiced
- ¼ tsp. sea salt
- ⅛ tsp. fresh black pepper
- ⅛ tsp. fresh cumin
- ⅛ tsp. fresh coriander
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 4 oz. olive oil
- 1 shallot, minced

Whisk ingredients together and toss with the salad just before serving.

Additions:

- 8 minute pastured egg
- Preserved sardines
- Cured fish
- Avocado