

Asian Beef & Roasted Pumpkin Salad



Wow! I loved this warm Asian inspired salad. As with all Asian food it had the perfect balance of hot, salty, sweet and sour as well as the crunch of fresh salad and aromatic herbs. Rib eye cooked to perfection and lightly charred roasted pumpkin completed this sensational dish. Another bonus? I only used two steaks to feed four people so it was easy on the wallet and deliciously healthy to boot! Not talking myself up or anything (much) but this was a standout meal.

Prep time: 30 Minutes
\$\$ Medium Budget

Cooking time: 30 Minutes

Serves 4

2 tbs of peanut oil

2 x 250-300gm Rib Eye steaks (you could use sirloin or rump if that is your preference)

500gm piece of Jam pumpkin cut into wedges

2 cloves of garlic, roughly chopped

3cm piece of ginger, roughly chopped

1 lemon grass stalk, thinly sliced

1 long red chilli, roughly chopped (seeds removed if you like it less spicy)

3 Kaffir lime leaves, centre vein removed, rolled and thinly sliced

1 tbs of fish sauce

For the Salad:

1 lebanese cucumber, halved, deseeded and sliced diagonally

1 punnet of grape tomatoes (multi coloured looks good if you can get them)

200gm of snow peas, topped and strings removed, halved diagonally and blanched in boiling water for 2 minutes

2 handfuls of bean shoots

For the Herb Topping:

2 spring onions, finely sliced diagonally

1 red chilli, halved deseeded and finely sliced diagonally

1 cup of coriander leaves

1/2 cup of mint leaves

1/2 cup of Thai basil or Vietnamese mint

For the Dressing:

1/3 cup of olive oil

1/4 cup of light soy sauce

2 tbs of rice wine vinegar

2 tbs of fish sauce

Juice of 1 lime

1 1/2 tbs of caster sugar

Place the garlic, ginger, chilli, lemon grass, kaffir lime leaves, 2 tbs of peanut oil and 1 tbs of fish sauce in a small food processor and whizz until you have a nice fine paste. Divide the mixture in two.

Pre heat the oven to 200°C. Place the pumpkin wedges in a lined baking tray and take half of the garlic/ginger mixture and rub it over the pumpkin so it nicely coated with the aromatics. Bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes or until tender and slightly charred.

To make the topping, place the ingredients in a medium sized bowl and top with cold water and a few ice cubes or alternatively, place it in the fridge for half an hour. This will make the topping lovely and crisp.

To make the dressing, combine all ingredients and the rest of the garlic/ginger mixture in a small bowl or jar with a lid. Whisk or shake to combine until the sugar has dissolved. Dip your finger in and have a taste, you want the perfect balance of sweet and sour so this would be the time to adjust any seasoning.

Prepare the steaks by rubbing them with a little oil and seasoning well with salt and pepper. Cook on a hot barbecue grill or griddle pan for approximately 4-6 minutes on either side for medium rare, depending on the thickness of your steak. If it is about an inch thick this should be enough but obviously cook it for longer if you like your steak medium. A medium rare steak should feel like the pad below your thumb when you gently press your thumb and middle finger together. Once cooked, remove from the grill and allow to rest for a few minutes before slicing across the grain of the steak.

Place the cucumber, tomato, bean sprouts and blanched snow peas in a bowl and spoon over about half of the dressing. Toss to combine and divide the salad between four serving plates or bowls. Place a pumpkin wedge on each plate and fan the steak over the salad. Drain the water from the topping and toss to combine before piling a generous helping on top and then spoon over the remaining dressing and serve.

Leftover herbs? You may want to make this.....

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