

# FOOD & DINING

## Unique, refreshing salad suitable for spring

Many people associate salads with dieting, and dieting with bland foods. But salads can be just as fresh and flavorful as other foods.

One of the best things about salad is the limitless possibilities regarding ingredients. Just about anything can be added to salad, making it a versatile dish anyone can enjoy. The following recipe for

“Melon Salad with Watercress and Oroblanco Vinaigrette” from Tal Ronnen’s “Crossroads” (Artisan) is just one of many takes on this refreshing and often nutritious meal.

### MELON SALAD WITH WATERCRESS AND OROBLANCO VINAIGRETTE

Serves 4

- 1 ripe canary or honeydew melon (about 2 pounds; see note)
- 2 Oroblanco or other seedless white grapefruits
- 1/2 cup fresh mint leaves, cut into chiffonade
- 1/2 cup finely diced Kite Hill truffle, dill, and chive soft fresh almond milk cheese (optional)
- 1/2 cup watercress, stems trimmed
- 1/4 cup Oroblanco Vinaigrette (recipe follows)
- Flaked sea salt, such as Maldon
- Freshly ground black pepper

**Canary melon:** The bright-yellow canary melon gets its name from the color of the tiny bird. The flesh is actually light green, with a sweet flavor that is slightly tangier than that of honeydew. If canary melon is unavailable, substitute honeydew.

**To prepare the melon:** Slice a small disk off the bottom of the melon so it can stand upright on a cutting board. Cut the melon down the middle to halve it and scoop out the seeds and membranes with a tablespoon. Halve the melon pieces again, so you have four 1/2-inch thick slabs. Lay the slabs on the cutting board and, using a 1-inch round cutter, punch out 5 circles from each slab. Set aside. Discard the rind.

**To segment the grapefruits:** First slice off the top and bottom of each one and stand upright on a cutting board. Use a paring knife to cut off the skin and bitter white pith of the fruit in strips from top to bottom, following the natural round shape and turning the grapefruit as you go. Trim off any white pith that remains. Hold each grapefruit over a bowl to catch the juices and carefully cut along the membranes on both sides of each segment to free it, letting the pieces drop into the bowl. Squeeze the juice from the grapefruit membranes into the bowl; you’ll need the juice for the vinaigrette.

**To serve:** Arrange 5 melon rounds on each plate. Strew the mint ribbons over them. Scatter the grapefruit segments, cheese, if using, and watercress on top. Drizzle with the vinaigrette and season with flaked sea salt and pepper.

### OROBLANCO VINAIGRETTE MAKES ABOUT 1 CUP

- 1/2 shallot, minced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 fresh basil leaves, finely chopped
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- 1/4 cup fresh Oroblanco grapefruit juice (reserved from salad)
- 1/4 cup white balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup grapeseed oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Combine the shallot, garlic, basil, and red pepper flakes in a small mixing bowl or a mason jar. Add the juice, vinegar, and oils, season with salt and black pepper, and whisk or shake vigorously to blend. Leftover vinaigrette can be kept covered in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.



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