

A sweet and tangy autumnal side dish

Even as summer seems to be winding down, the produce currently available can't help but inspire me to create salads. This recipe would be equally welcome on the side of a barbeque or an autumnal roast.

Blackberries have been a bit late this year, but now they are available there are plenty of reasons to make the most of them. Not only do they make a tangy addition to this salad, but they offer a good source of the vitamins C, E, and K, calcium, potassium, and manganese, as well as the antioxidants anthocyanins which have been shown to exhibit potential anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial properties.

Pears are just coming into season, and this dish works well with a firmer less ripe fruit as opposed to a softer, fully ripe pear. They also provide good levels of vitamin C, K, and potassium, alongside iron, magnesium, riboflavin, vitamin B6, and folate. As with so many other foods the different coloured varieties offer us different phytonutrients, for example, the red or blush varieties have more carotenoids.

Pear and blackberry salad

(serves 2-4)

1 pear

160g blackberries

big handful spinach leaves

big handful rocket

1 handful walnuts

1.5 tbsp lemon juice

3 tbsp olive oil

pinch of salt and pepper

Optional extras: blue cheese, red onion, other salad leaves



Wash the spinach and rocket leaves, spin or pat dry, and pop in a large salad bowl. Wash the blackberries (especially if foraged yourself – soak in water with a little vinegar or salt for a few minutes, then drain) and pat dry.

Carefully half, core, and finely slice the pear, adding to the salad leaves.

Mix the lemon juice, oil, salt, and pepper. At this point there are 2 options, scatter all the blackberries over the salad and pour over the dressing, OR blend and strain 60g of the berries, and mix the juice into the dressing, before adding the rest of the berries to the salad and dressing with the blackberry boosted mixture.

Lightly crush the walnuts, and scatter over the top before serving, enjoy!

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