

WARM WINTER SALAD

This salad was one of the first recipes I created for the book and I've been coming back to it time and time again ever since. I just love the mix of flavors and textures here, from the wilted spinach and roasted eggplant to the crunchy pine nuts, sweet sun-dried tomatoes and creamy tahini sauce. It's a pretty filling dish, but if you're feeling really hungry, then try serving it with some brown rice or quinoa with a little lemon drizzled over. It's one of my favorite meals to make for friends when I'm after an easy kitchen supper and it's always such a winner.

Serves 4

4 small eggplants (about 5 ounces each)
olive oil
1 tablespoon dried mixed herbs (I love herbes de Provence)
salt and pepper
2 bags of spinach (about 8 ounces each)
4 tablespoons tahini
juice of 1 lime
3¼ cups sun-dried tomatoes packed in olive oil (about 12 ounces)
¾ cup pine nuts (about 3½ ounces)

Preheat the oven to 400°F (convection 350°F).

Slice the eggplant into thin strips about ¼ inch thick.

Place the strips on a baking sheet with a generous amount of olive oil, the dried herbs, salt and pepper.

Bake for 20 minutes.

About 5 minutes before the eggplant is done, place the spinach into a large frying pan with a little olive oil, salt and pepper and allow it to wilt. Once it's wilted, add the tahini, lime juice and sun-dried tomatoes.

In a separate pan, toast the pine nuts for a minute or 2, being sure not to let them burn—they don't need any oil to cook as they contain enough of their own oil.

Add the eggplant and pine nuts to the spinach pan and mix well before serving.

Top tip

Watch out for the ingredients in some sun-dried tomatoes—they can often contain lots of sugars and preservatives. If you can only find those, then rinse them in boiling water before using them.