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Arugula – A culinary trend here to stay!

Arugula – peppery, spicy and mustard-like to the taste buds, this leafy green is no ordinary lettuce, in fact it isn't a lettuce at all. Originally grown in the Mediterranean in ancient times, it's a small, low growing herb traditionally used as a garnish or left raw in dishes. Another common name for arugula is salad rocket and today we can find it readily available year-round in our local super markets and farmers markets. The smooth dark green leaves somewhat resemble that of dandelion and is available in a regular or baby variation. If you want big flavour, go for the regular size, but if you want delicate and a more mild taste opt for the baby kind.

In the culinary world, arugula can often be found in salad bowls, adorning the tops of gourmet pizzas, and in pastas and pesto. Arugula has made a strong comeback and with the culinary world developing new uses for it all the time, it's not going anywhere anytime soon.

Our Arugula Pesto Turkey Burgers are the perfect meal to compliment the arugula trend. The freshness of the arugula and turkey, combined with the almonds and parmesan cheese work together flawlessly to develop an incredible flavour combination that makes these burgers a true culinary treat.

If arugula is new to you and you want to give it a whirl, try our Arugula Caprese Salad. The mildness of the bocconcini and the acidity of the tomato really let the arugula sing. It's also a good test to see if you enjoy the bold flavour arugula has to offer.

If you're a big arugula lover, you can also pair this salad with the burgers for a complete gourmet arugula inspired feast.

ARUGULA PESTO TURKEY BURGERS

3 cups arugula
6 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
6 tbsp slivered almonds
3 tbsp freshly grated Parmesan cheese
2 1/4 tsp fresh lemon juice
1 clove garlic, chopped
Pinch salt
2 lb (1 kg) ground turkey
3/4 cup panko

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1 tsp freshly ground pepper
1/2 tsp salt
Canola oil*
8 hamburger buns
Brie cheese slices, optional
Buttermilk Slaw (recipe follows)

1. To prepare pesto, place arugula, olive oil, almonds, Parmesan cheese, lemon juice, garlic and pinch of salt in a blender; purée until smooth.
2. Transfer pesto to a bowl. Add turkey, panko, pepper and 1/2 tsp salt; stir to combine. Shape mixture into 8 patties. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours.
3. Brush both sides of patties with canola oil.
4. Grill patties over medium heat on natural gas barbecue until completely cooked.
5. Serve in buns with brie and Buttermilk Slaw. Makes 8.

Buttermilk Slaw

1/4 cup buttermilk
2 1/2 tbsp canola oil
1 tbsp sliced green onion
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 tbsp liquid honey
1 tsp Dijon mustard
1/2 clove garlic, finely chopped
2 cups thinly sliced green cabbage
2 cups thinly sliced red cabbage

1. To prepare dressing, whisk together buttermilk, oil, green onion, vinegar, honey, mustard and garlic until blended.
2. Combine green and red cabbage in a bowl.
3. Add dressing and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes before serving. Makes about 4 cups.

ARUGULA CAPRESE SALAD

Caprese salad is an Italian salad that typically consists of tomatoes, mozzarella and basil.

2 tbsp white wine vinegar
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 tsp liquid honey
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp freshly ground pepper

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1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
4 cups arugula
2 cups halved grape tomatoes
1 1/4 cups mini bocconcini
1 cup fresh basil leaves, torn into pieces

To prepare dressing, whisk together vinegar, garlic, honey, salt and pepper until combined. Gradually whisk in oil until blended.

Combine arugula, tomatoes, bocconcini and basil in a bowl. Add dressing and toss to combine. Serves 8.