Spinach Salad with Grilled Eggplant and Feta

BY CHRIS SCHLESINGER AND JOHN WILLOUGHBY GOURMET JUNE 2009 YieldServes 4 (main course)

Ingredients 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice 1 teaspoon minced garlic 2 teaspoons chopped marjoram or oregano 1 (1 1/4-pounds) eggplant, trimmed and cut into 8 (1-inch-thick) rounds 10 ounces baby spinach 1 cup crumbled feta (1/4 pound) 1/4 cup pine nuts (1 ounce), lightly toasted

Preparation

Prepare grill for direct-heat cooking over hot charcoal (high heat for gas); see Grilling Procedure . Whisk together oil, lemon juice, garlic, marjoram, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon pepper in a small bowl.

Brush both sides of eggplant slices with some of dressing. Season with 1/4 teaspoon each of salt and pepper. Oil grill rack, then grill eggplant, covered only if using a gas grill, turning occasionally, until tender, 12 to 15 minutes total. Cut into pieces.

Toss spinach with enough dressing to coat and season with salt and pepper. Add eggplant, feta, and pine nuts and toss again.

Cooks' notes:

•Eggplant can be grilled, in batches if necessary, in a lightly oiled hot grill pan over medium-high heat.

• Eggplant can be grilled 1 day ahead and chilled. Bring to room temperature before using.