



Tomato, Fennel, Asparagus Salad

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

- 4-5 Small Tomatoes
- 1 Medium Bulb Fennel
- 1 Bunch Asparagus
- 1 Avocado (optional)
- Fresh Parsley
- 1 Lemon
- 1 Tbsp Olive Oil
- Salt
- Black or White Pepper

Instructions

This is very easy to make dish that serves 2 or 4 well. The fennel and asparagus provide a nice crispness to the softness of the tomato and avocado.

Prep. Boil a pot of water large enough to dip a colander/strainer in. This will be for a quick blanching of the asparagus. Add salt.

Prep. A bowl or sink with ice cold water. This will also be for the asparagus, to halt the cooking process.

Steps. While the water is preparing to boil. Take the tomatoes and wedge them—cut the stem edge of, then half on the round side, turn upside down on the flat edge while holding the two halves together, and cut into four. This will produce nice bit size wedges for the salad.

Take the fennel bulb, cut off the both the top leafy edge and the bottom root. Wash/rinse well under cool water to remove any dirt or blemishes from outer bulb. Cut the bulb in half longways. Turn the half bulbs onto the flat and thinly slice the fennel. You want it thick enough to provide a bit of a crunch, but not to be too chewy.

Add the fennel to the bowl with the tomatoes. By this time, the water should be boiling. So let's blanch the asparagus.

Take the bunch of asparagus. Cut into three, with two cuts. The first, should be ~1in from the edge of the tips, giving you the tender tip and some stalk. The next cut, is to provide more of the firm, green stalk. About 1.5 to 2 inches in length. The remaining stalk can be tossed or used for some other dish.

Place the asparagus in the colander and dip into the boiling water for no more than 1 minute. The asparagus should turn a bright green. Remove from boiling water and place in the ice cold water. The cold bath will stop the cooking process and retain the brilliant green and firmness of the vegetable for the dish.

While the asparagus is bathing in cold water, quickly cut up some parsley (curly leaf or flat works equally well). Add parsley, juice of a small lemon, the tablespoon of olive oil, salt, and pepper as desired to the bowl with tomatoes and fennel.

Drain the asparagus, toss into the bowl and gentle hand toss the mix. You don't want to break the tomatoes down any further than they currently are, so hand tossing/mixing is the gentlest method for mixing.

Plate. The salads ready to eat. Plate it. If you're adding avocado now is the time. Sprinkle 1/4 to 1/2 of the avocado across the 2-4 dishes. Garnish with more parsley, a fresh squeeze of lemon, and some finishing salt.

Options. If you have a very good balsamic vinegar, a touch added to the plate adds a sweetness to the plate. The lemon and fennel can make the dish a bit tart.

Calories. The entire dish is about 500 calories and serves four. So about 125 calories per serving.