

You Goat Girl

Consider this a still life: crisp-tender green beans, voluptuous grilled figs, and toasted walnuts slicked with nut oil. This is food as art, especially when crumbles of creamy-white goat cheese spill over a field of garden hues-brilliant green, blue-black, and burnished brown.



Ingredients:

Dressing

1/3 cup walnut oil
2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1 tablespoon minced shallot
Freshly ground pepper to taste

1 tablespoon plus 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1 pound young, tender green beans, trimmed
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
2 teaspoons walnut oil
12 ripe black Mission figs, halved
Vegetable oil for brushing
3 ounces goat cheese



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Savvy Recipes for Girls Who Play with Fire
By Diane Morgan

To make the dressing: In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine the dressing ingredients. Shake well, making sure the sugar dissolves. Set aside.

Fill a large stockpot three-quarters full with water, cover, and bring to a boil. Have ready a large bowl of ice water. Add the 1 tablespoon salt to the boiling water, then the beans, and cook until bright green and crisp-tender, 2 to 4 minutes. Drain the beans and plunge into the ice water until cold, about 1 to 2 minutes. Drain, wrap in several layers of paper towels, and place in a plastic bag. Refrigerate until 30 minutes before serving.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 325°F. Toss the walnuts with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and the walnut oil. Spread on a rimmed baking sheet and bake until lightly browned, about 8 to 10 minutes. Set aside.

Prepare a medium fire in a charcoal grill or preheat a gas or electric grill on medium. Brush the figs with vegetable oil. When ready to grill, brush the grill grate with vegetable oil. Place the figs directly over the medium fire. Grill, cut-side down, just until grill marks appear, about 1 minute. Turn and grill until tender but still firm, about 1 minute.

Place the beans and figs in a large bowl and toss with the dressing. Divide among individual salad plates. Garnish with the walnuts and crumble some goat cheese on top.

Serves 6

Cook and Tell

Walnut oil adds an unctuous, nutty-rich flavor to salads. Be sure to refrigerate after opening. Delicate Japanese rice wine vinegar balances this dish perfectly.