

Luminous Watermelon Salad

Salad:

watermelon
cucumber
flaky sea salt

Granita:

1 lime
1 c. Tonic water

Mint Oil:

a handful of mint leaves
½ c. grapeseed oil

Make Granita

Juice lime and add juice to tonic water. There are endless techniques to make a granita, each technique yielding a slightly different texture. I favor the method of freezing granita in a shallow dish, stirring every half hour or so for the first hour and a half of freezing (though the sugar content of this granita is so low that this step is not quite as necessary). Once the granita is frozen solid, use a fork to scrape off flakes of snowy granita. You can also freeze the granita in an ice cube tray and throw the cubes into the food processor right before serving.

Make Infused Oil

Bring a saucepan or kettle of water to a boil. Pour boiling water over mint leaves and leave them to wilt for one minute exactly. Pull the leaves from the hot water and immediately plunge into a large bowl of ice water. Squeeze excess water from the leaves and throw them into a blender. Blend wilted leaves together with grapeseed oil on high speed for one minute or until leaves are completely pulverized. Strain oil through a tea strainer or several layers of cheesecloth.

Cut Salad

Halve and peel cucumbers, scoop out the seeds with a teaspoon. Cut watermelon and cucumber into very neat, small cubes. Reserve the odd pieces for another use (agua fresca, perhaps?).

Plate

It is ideal to use chilled plates for this dish. Drizzle mint oil on the plate in a very simple decorative pattern (the oil will move and slide more than an emulsified sauce, so complex patterns do not work well). Place a dessert ring* on the plate and spoon in the cucumber and melon mix. Gently press down on the top of the salad to help it hold its shape, but not so hard as to crush the fruit. Carefully lift the mold away. Sprinkle the plate and top of the fruit with sea salt. Scrape or process granita, and place a

Kitchen Table Scraps

generous spoonful on top of the cucumber melon mix. Serve immediately.

Store:

Cut watermelon and cucumber will keep refrigerated for several days. Mint oil will keep at room temperature for about a week, or refrigerated for several weeks. Granita will keep indefinitely, though you might need to recrunch or scrape it before serving.

*Don't worry if you don't have a dessert ring. Simply cut a 2" deep section from a water or soda bottle with straight sides.