

# Crostada Salad with Caramelized Pears and Walnuts

*From The-Stupids.com*

We shamelessly stole this one from the fabulous Emilio's Restaurant in Santa Barbara (HIGHLY recommended!). They didn't exactly GIVE us the recipe, but we ate it about six hundred times, then went through variation after variation in our test kitchen until we thought we had it down pretty well.

Recipe serves eight.

- 2 pears (firm and almost ripe is best)
- 2 tbs butter
- 1 tbs sugar
- 3 tbs white wine
- 3 sheets phyllo
- 1 lb medium-soft goat cheese
- 1/2 c shelled walnuts (or pecans)
- 1/4 c rice vinegar
- 3 tbs white wine vinegar
- 1/2 c walnut oil or light olive oil
- 1-2 cloves garlic, finely minced
- salt and pepper
- 6-8 cups mixed baby salad greens
- 2-3 tbs olive oil

Peel and core the pears, then cut into 1/2" dice. Melt the butter in a saute pan over medium heat, then add the pears and sugar. Saute, with frequent stirring, until the pears start to caramelize a bit, then deglaze with the white wine. Reduce until the pears are just glazed, then remove from heat and cool.

Cut the phyllo into long, thin strips (chiffonade). What works well and saves fingers is the spaghetti cutter on pasta machines. Form the goat cheese into eight hockey pucks. Wrap each puck in a nest of phyllos strips - the pucks should now look like light shredded wheat. Place them on an oiled baking sheet and put aside. Preheat a broiler.

In a dry pan or toaster oven, lightly toast the walnuts, then set aside to cool. Whisk together the two vinegars, the walnut oil, garlic, and a pinch of salt and pepper to taste. Toss the greens with the dressing. Distribute among the 8 plates; on each plate, spoon the caramelized pears and walnuts around the outside of the greens.

Brush the phyllo/cheese hockey pucks with olive oil (an aerosol sprayer also works well), then pop under the broiler until lightly browned. Turn them over and brown the other side. Place on the center of the greens and serve immediately.

This salad is awesome with a crisp chardonnay like a Macon or Chablis. It even worked well (maybe better than well!) with a '91 Niellon Chevalier-Montrachet.

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