

California Strawberry Festival

STRAWBERRY VINAIGRETTE MARINATED BACON STEAK OVER WARM SPINACH STRAWBERRY & HAZELNUT SALAD WITH STRAWBERRY VINAIGRETTE REDUCTION, GINGER SCALLIOIN SAUCE & STRAWBERRY CAVIAR

Courtesy of 2015 Berry Blast Off Co-Winner Jodi Taffel of Altadena, CA

For Strawberry Vinaigrette Marinated Bacon Steak

- *2 cups Balsamic Vinegar
- *¼ cup Apple Cider Vinegar
- *1 cup fresh Strawberries
- *3 Garlic Cloves
- *2 tablespoons fresh Tarragon
- *1 tablespoon Plum Sauce
- *1 tablespoon Black Peppercorns
- *1 teaspoon Paprika
- *1 pound Slab Bacon

1. Place all of the ingredients except for the bacon into a blender and blend until smooth.
2. Slice the slab bacon into 6 equal sized chunks and gently poke a few times with the tines of a fork.
3. Place the marinade and bacon in a zip top bag and allow to marinate for 15 minutes.
4. Place the bacon and marinade in a large pot or dutch oven, cover, and set over medium high heat for 30 minutes.
5. Remove Bacon from the pot and put in a lightly greased skillet over medium heat. Cook on both sides for 5 minutes until slightly crisp.
6. Increase heat under remaining marinade and reduce uncovered until it coats the back of a spoon.

For Spinach Strawberry & Hazelnut Salad

- *3 cups fresh baby spinach
- *1 cup fresh strawberries
- *¼ cup hazelnuts
- *1 tablespoon olive oil
- *¼ cup sliced shallots
- *1 teaspoon minced garlic

1. While the bacon is marinating, toast the hazelnuts in a dry skillet over medium heat for 3-5 minutes, or until you can smell them. Remove from the pan and chop coarsely.
2. Add olive oil and shallots to the warm skillet and cook until translucent. Add the garlic and cook an additional minute.
3. Toss everything together and set aside.

For Ginger Scallion Sauce

- *1 cup thinly sliced scallions
- * $\frac{1}{4}$ cup ginger paste
- * $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grapeseed oil
- * $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon soy sauce
- * $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sherry vinegar
- * $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sesame oil
- * $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- *black & white sesame seeds for garnish

Mix everything but the sesame seeds together in a bowl and set aside for at least 15 minutes. When served, sprinkle sesame seeds on top.

For Strawberry Caviar

- *4 cups grapeseed oil
- *1 cup fresh strawberries
- *1 cup strawberry juice
- *2 tablespoons Agar Agar
- *4 cups cold water

1. While bacon is cooking, pour one cup grapeseed oil into each of 4 bowls set over ice.
2. Blend strawberries and juice in a blender until smooth.
3. Pour strawberry mixture into cheesecloth and squeeze all the liquid out into a saucepan.
4. Add liquid and agar agar to a saucepan and bring to a boil.
5. Pour liquid into the bottom of a caviar maker and cover with pipette tray. Draw liquid up into the droppers and slowly drop balls into one bowl of grapeseed oil.
6. Repeat the last step 3 more times.
7. Remove strawberry caviar from the oil and drop in cold water.

To Assemble

1. Toss spinach salad mixture with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the warm strawberry vinaigrette reduction and evenly distribute on each of 6 plates.
2. Carefully place one bacon “steak” on top of the salad.
3. Top each “steak” with a quenelle of ginger scallion sauce and some sesame seeds
4. Place one dollop of the strawberry caviar on top of the ginger scallion sauce and another dollop in one corner of each plate.