

Summer Watermelon Salad

This summer salad is loaded with watermelon, arugula, fresh mint and basil. It is an awesome way to beat the summer's heat!

Summer is the season of fire. Its associated color is red, and its organs include the heart and small intestine. Watermelon is cooling, and it is a mild diuretic. It is rich in electrolytes, and is used in Chinese Medicine to help combat summer heat. Lightly salted, it is one of my favorite summer post-workout foods!

Mint is also cooling. The basil adds a fragrant and warming element to this salad to balance all the cold. Arugula is bitter, spicy, and neutral in temperature, adding a sharp bite to balance the unabashed sweetness of the watermelon. The pomegranate vinaigrette adds a note of sour and feta adds a bit of salty, making this salad a perfect balance of the five flavors.

This recipe will serve 5-6 people as an appetizer or side dish, and is deliberately dressed lightly. Use the quantities of ingredients given as a guide – if you love mint, feel free to add more. If you hate basil, reduce or omit it. Feel free to experiment – while I haven't tried it yet, I bet bleu cheese would make a fine substitute for the feta...

6 cups (approx $\frac{3}{4}$ of a 6-7 lb melon) seedless watermelon, chopped into $\frac{3}{4}$ inch pieces
2.5 oz arugula, torn into bite sized pieces
3 Tbsp. fresh mint, chopped
3 Tbsp. fresh basil, chopped
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pine nuts, lightly toasted
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup golden raisins
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup crumbled feta (I love the Israeli feta from Trader Joes!)
1 recipe pomegranate vinaigrette (below)

Combine all ingredients, and chill for 30 minutes. Serve cold.

Pomegranate Vinaigrette

1 Tbsp. olive oil
1.5 tsp white vinegar
1 Tbsp. concentrated pomegranate juice
1.5 tsp. organic raw sugar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

Combine all ingredients, and whisk until combined.