

Cousin Elly's Summer Salad with Fried Cheese

Sundays at the Bellport | May 2005



While the vegetables are marinating in a ginger-cumin dressing, fry the cheese (Queso Fresco is a fresh cheese available at Mexican markets) and make the yogurt sauce. Try using a squirt bottle to drizzle the sauce.

- 1 TBSP. FINELY SHREDDED LEMON PEEL
- ³/₄ CUP FRESH LEMON JUICE
- ¹/₄ CUP CHOPPED FRESH GINGER
- 2 TSP. CUMIN SEEDS, TOASTED
- 2 TSP. SALT
- 1 TSP. FRESHLY GROUND BLACK PEPPER
- 1 SEEDLESS CUCUMBER, CHOPPED (2 CUPS)
- 1 LB. PLUM TOMATOES, CHOPPED
- 2 STALKS CELERY, SLICED ¹/₂ INCH THICK
- 1 RED SWEET PEPPER, SEEDED AND COARSELY CHOPPED
- 1 POBLANO PEPPER, SEEDED AND COARSELY CHOPPED
- 9 OZ. QUESO FRESCO CHEESE, CUBED
- 1 CUP ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
- 2 CUPS COOKING OIL
- 1 8-OZ. CONTAINER PLAIN LOW-FAT YOGURT
- 2 TBSP. LEMON JUICE
- 1 SMALL HEAD ROMAINE, TORN
- 1 HEAD RADICCHIO, TORN

For ginger dressing, in a blender or food processor combine lemon peel, lemon juice, ginger, cumin, salt, and black pepper. Cover; blend or process until smooth; set aside.

In a large bowl combine cucumber, tomatoes, celery, sweet pepper, and poblano pepper. Add ginger dressing; toss to coat. Cover; chill 1 hour.

In a large resealable plastic bag combine cheese and flour. Seal bag and shake to coat. In a large saucepan heat oil to 325°. (When a drop of water is flicked into the pan, it should spatter.) Fry the cheese in batches until golden brown. Drain on paper towels.

In a bowl mix yogurt, 2 tablespoons lemon juice, and additional salt and pepper to taste. On a platter place romaine and radicchio. Top with marinated vegetables and cheese. Drizzle with yogurt mixture. Makes 6 to 8 servings.