

Caramelized Pumpkin and Fennel with Whipped Tofu and Dukkah

1, 2lb Pie Pumpkin
1 large fennel bulb
7 oz silken tofu
1 lemon
6 T olive oil + 1/2 a teaspoon
1 T pumpkin seeds
1 T sesame seeds
1 tsp sunflower seeds
1/4 tsp cumin
1/4 tsp chili powder
2 tsp kosher salt

Preheat oven to 350F degrees. Peel skin off the pumpkin and then slice it in half crosswise. Scoop out all the seeds with a large spoon and rinse in a colander with cold water until they are clean. Leave seeds to dry on a paper towel. Slice the pumpkin into quarters then slice each quarter into 7-8 smaller pieces. Wash and then slice the fennel bulb in half and peel off the outermost layer. Cut each half into 4-5 sections. Save the fennel fronds for garnish later. Zest the entire lemon then cut the lemon in half and set aside. Preheat two large frying pans or skillets on medium heat with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in each one. Add the pumpkin to one pan and the fennel to the other once hot and season each with half a teaspoon of kosher salt. If you need to sauté the vegetables in batches that is fine. The vegetables should take about 15 minutes. While the vegetables begin to soften and brown, cut the silken tofu into about 1-inch cubes. Add the tofu to a blender with another 1/4 teaspoon of salt and half of the lemon zest.



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Juice half of the lemon and add that as well, make sure to keep any lemon seeds out. Start the blender on low for 10 seconds then move to the highest setting for 15 seconds or until the tofu mixture is completely smooth. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil and blend for another 15-20 seconds. Taste the mixture and adjust seasoning. Check the squash and fennel and turn each piece over to ensure even browning. Once they are soft all the way through remove them from the pans. Mix the dry pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds and sunflower seeds together with the 1/2 teaspoon of olive oil and the spices to make the dukkah base. Add a pinch of salt as well. Put the seed mixture on a small sheet tray with baking paper and toast the seeds in the oven until golden brown, about 4-5 minutes. To plate the dish spread the whipped tofu on the bottom of a large serving plate or shallow bowl. Layer the caramelized pumpkin and fennel on top. Add the rest of the lemon zest and pick some fennel fronds to place on top as well. Sprinkle the dukkah over the top and season with more salt if desired.

Recipe by Garden Chef Jacob Rich



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