Sweet Corn and Fig Salad

Ingredients

6 cups corn kernels (about 8 ears), roasted and removed from cob
1 T olive oil
1 red onion, diced
1 red bell pepper, diced
1 fennel bulb, diced
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 pint whole figs, quartered
2 cups cooked barley
1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled

For the dressing:
zest of 1 lemon
1 T maple syrup, or to taste
2 T fresh parsley, chopped
2 T fresh basil, chopped
1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
2 T dijon mustard
1/2 cup olive oil

Method

Preheat oven to 400°F. Place whole corn directly on oven rack. Roast for 25–30 minutes. Let cool, then remove kernels. In a skillet, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium heat. Add diced onion, bell pepper, fennel, and chopped garlic. Sauté until softened. Cut figs into quarters. In a large mixing bowl, combine roasted corn, sautéed vegetables, and figs. Set aside.

In a saucepan, bring 3 cups of water and 1 cup barley to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer for 25–30 minutes or until tender and water is absorbed. In a small bowl, whisk together all of the dressing ingredients. Add cooked barley to the corn mixture. Toss with the dressing. Add feta just before serving.

Note: This is a great, heartier side dish to accompany grilled steaks or fish. For a gluten-free version, substitute quinoa or wild rice for barley.

Recipe by Garden Chef Anïsa Lewis