

Asparagus Salad with Sesame-Tangerine Vinaigrette

Salad:

2 lbs. asparagus, rough bottoms trimmed
1 - 2 t. extra virgin olive oil (optional, see below)
2-3 large tangerines or small oranges, peeled and segmented
1 large head of lettuce: red leaf, green leaf, butter, etc. for the base

Vinaigrette:

1/3 c. fresh tangerine juice or orange juice
2 t. rice vinegar
1 ½ t. sesame oil
1 ½ t. grated tangerine or orange zest
1 large garlic clove, pressed or minced
1 t. minced fresh ginger
salt & pepper to taste

Garnishes:

2 - 3 T. finely chopped green onions / Spring onions
2 - 3 T. finely chopped dry-roasted peanuts
1 - 2 T. toasted sesame seeds (black or white)

Trim tough ends from asparagus by snapping off bottom portion and cook by roasting or blanching/shocking:

If roasting asparagus.....

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Spread trimmed asparagus on a sheet pan. Drizzle with oil (something neutral like avocado oil would work best) and mix to coat. Roast asparagus until crisp-tender, turning/shaking once during cooking, about 7 minutes. Cool, then cut into 2" lengths on the bias if desired.

If blanching/shocking asparagus.....

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add asparagus and cook until just bright green and fork tender, about 3-5 minutes. Immediately plunge asparagus into ice water to cool. Drain, cut into 2" lengths if desired and set aside.

Prepare vinaigrette: whisk the tangerine juice, vinegar, tangerine zest, garlic and ginger in a medium bowl to blend. Slowly drizzle in the sesame oil, whisking constantly. Season with salt and pepper.

Toss asparagus in vinaigrette. Place lettuce on salad plates and top with asparagus, then tangerine segments. Drizzle remaining dressing over the salads. Sprinkle with green onions, peanuts and sesame seeds, and serve.

Chef's Note: You may make the vinaigrette ahead of time and keep it in the fridge until ready to serve. Don't dress the salad until right before service, so the veggies stay bright green.

Serves 4 - 6.