

Anjum Anand's charred spiced sweet potato salad recipe

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Explore flavours of India with this delicious spice salad by our March 2017 cover star, Anjum Anand.

North India grows lovely sweet potatoes; they are white-fleshed, sweet and creamy. When in season, they are grilled whole in their skins on street stalls and served with lemon juice and the delicious spice blend chaat masala, that balances out their inherent sweetness. This is a Westernised, embellished version of that dish, made with orange-fleshed sweet potatoes. It works really, really well. It is a fusion dish but one that, for me, works better than both originals and makes an amazing summery salad.

For the sweet potatoes

- 2 large sweet potatoes (around 450 g in total), scrubbed
- Salt and lots of freshly ground black pepper
- A little vegetable oil
- ¼ small red onion, very thinly sliced
- 1 Indian green finger chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
- 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds, lightly toasted in a pan until puffed up
- 2 large handfuls of watercress or rocket (arugula)

For the dressing

- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 4 tbsp mayonnaise, low-fat if you like
- 2 rounded tbsp Greek yoghurt
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- ½–¾ tsp chaat masala
- 1 medium-small garlic clove, finely grated
- ½ tsp brown mustard seeds
- ½ tsp fennel seeds

Method

Cut the potatoes into large wedges: the best way is to halve them horizontally and wedge each side. Place in a large pot of boiling salted water, return to the boil and simmer until the tip of a knife goes through easily, around 8 to 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the dressing. Whisk together the lemon juice, mayonnaise, yoghurt, half the oil, the chaat masala and garlic. Season to taste. Heat the remaining olive oil in a small saucepan, tilting it so the oil collects in one area. When hot, add the mustard seeds and reduce the heat. After 5 seconds, follow with the fennel seeds and cook until the mustard seeds pop, another few seconds or so. Stir into the dressing and season to taste.

Drain the cooked potatoes and, once dry, place on a hot oiled griddle and cook for 1 to 2 minutes on each side, or until the wedges have lovely grill stripes. Add them straight into the dressing with the red onion, green chilli and most of the pumpkins seeds and leaves. Toss well, garnish with the remaining seeds and leaves and serve.

Food photography: **Martin Pool.**

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