

Gingery Minted Persimmon Yogurt Salad

Serves 2

This is an excellent side dish to any main course, but it works especially well with spicy foods because of the cooling effect of the yogurt, fruit and mint. You can think of it as a kind of fruity raita.

1 tablespoon fruity extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons minced shallot

1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger, or less to taste

2 medium-large Fuyu persimmon, peeled and thinly sliced

3 tablespoons plain full-fat Greek yogurt or other plain yogurt

1 tablespoon soy sauce

Freshly ground black peppercorns, to taste

1 or 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint, to taste

Instructions: Heat the olive oil in a small pan over medium heat. Add the shallot and ginger, and gently saute for about 5 minutes, or until soft and fragrant. Set aside.

Place the persimmon slices

in a large mixing bowl; add the shallot-ginger mixture, yogurt and soy sauce, and gently toss until thoroughly combined. Season with the pepper, and sprinkle with mint.

Serve at room temperature or slightly chilled.

Per serving: 209 calories, 3 g protein, 35 g carbohydrate, 8 g fat (2 g saturated), 3 mg cholesterol, 281 mg sodium, 6 g fiber.

Persimmon oatmeal? Rolled oats, a drippy Hachiya (if you want to get fancy, push it through a sieve first), milk, a little water, some chopped crystallized ginger, a few goji berries or other dried fruit, splash of vanilla extract and a pinch of kosher salt. Top with slices of Fuyu, or ripe banana. The very thought of this breakfast moves me to jump out of bed in the morning.

The world's quickest killer dessert is cut-up Fuyus, sauteed gently in butter and cinnamon, followed by a splash of Grand Marnier. More ambitious desserts include persimmon ice cream, pie, pudding and creme brulee.

It breaks my heart to see so many persimmons falling off trees, unused and unloved. I often knock on the door of the tree owner and politely inquire whether I can be

of service to them by removing any unwanted persimmons from their tree and yard. I'll even give them a recipe or two, which sometimes makes them hesitate in allowing me to clean out their tree.

Eric Gower is a Marin County cookbook author, private chef and cooking teacher. E-mail him at food@sfbchronicle.com, and learn more about his approach to food and life at breakawaycook.com.