

Baby Greens Salad with Roasted Figs, Bacon, and Warm Goat Cheese

Serves 4 as a first course/hefty side

4 ounce goat cheese log
1 egg white
1/3 cup bread crumbs
olive oil (optional)
8 black mission figs, stemmed and cut in half
2 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar + extra for drizzling
4 slices thick-cut bacon
2 Tbsp. pine nuts, toasted
8 cups baby greens
sea salt and freshly ground pepper

Season the bread crumbs with a few grinds of pepper. Slice the goat cheese into 8, 1/2 oz. pieces. Dip each slice into the egg white, and then into the breadcrumbs, lightly patting to make sure the crumbs adhere all around. Refrigerate or freeze for 15-20 minutes.

Meanwhile, roast the figs. Preheat the oven to 400. Lay the figs cut side up on a baking sheet/pan and drizzle with balsamic vinegar. Season with salt and pepper. Roast for about 6 minutes or until soft and slightly caramelized. Reserve any additional balsamic/drippings. You can bake the goat cheese medallions at the same time, if you want, or pan-fry them in a little olive oil, at about the same time you are making the bacon.

Cook the bacon in a clean, dry skillet (you might as well use this pan for toasting the pine nuts, before you cook the bacon). Remove the bacon to some paper towels to drain, leaving behind the fat (drain some if it's more than 2 Tbsp.). Crumble the bacon.

Off the heat, but while the pan is still hot, add 2 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar and any drippings from the fig pan. Scrape up anything that may be left on the pan.

Plate your greens, top with the figs, hot goat cheese medallions, crumbled bacon, and pine nuts. Drizzle with the balsamic/bacon dressing.