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Yotam Ottolenghi's late winter salad recipes

We're still a way off the first spring goodies, so raid the store cupboard, add a hit of citrus, vinegar and herbs, and you freshen up tired tastebuds after the long winter

Yotam Ottolenghi
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For those who can't stand anchovies, capers make an adequate substitute. Likewise, normal oranges work perfectly well. Photograph: Colin Campbell

Even at this time of year it's possible to create tremendously fresh salads using herbs, citrus, vinegar and a few store cupboard staples.

Blood orange and anchovy salad

Of all the salted anchovies in oil on the market, the Spanish Ortiz brand is probably the best (Brindisa sells them at £17.50 for six 47g tins). They are meaty, just salty enough and are filleted properly, by hand, so they don't share that gritty texture many anchovies seem to have. For those people who just can't stand anchovies (even ones as good as these), capers make an adequate substitute. Likewise, normal oranges work perfectly well when blood oranges are not around. Serves four.

3 tbsp white-wine vinegar
100ml olive oil
Coarse sea salt and black pepper
200g raw fennel, cut widthways into 2mm slices
2 tsp fennel seeds
2 tsp coriander seeds
5 blood oranges (about 400g in all)
60g radishes, thinly sliced
70g Kalamata olives, pitted
20g basil leaves, roughly shredded
10g tarragon leaves, roughly chopped
30g Ortiz anchovies, cut into 2cm-long pieces
40g rocket

Put half the vinegar, three tablespoons of the olive oil and some salt in a bowl, stir in the sliced fennel and set aside to soften for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, toast the fennel seeds and coriander seeds in a dry frying pan for about two minutes, until they just begin to release their aroma, then crush roughly with a pestle and mortar.

Chop off and discard the ends of the oranges. One by one, stand the oranges upright on a chopping board and, with a sharp knife, cut downwards to remove the skin and pith in neat sections. Once peeled, cut each orange into 0.5cm thick slices (you'll get around six slices from each orange) and place in a bowl.

Add the radishes, olives, basil, tarragon, anchovies, rocket, softened fennel and crushed fennel and coriander seeds. Add the remaining oil and vinegar, and toss the salad gently – it's always best to use your hands for this. Season to taste, then divide between four plates and serve.

Crunchy root vegetables

This salad takes a while to make because the root veg have to be cut into long, thin matchsticks. A mandolin or food processor with the appropriate attachment will save you hassle and time. Kohlrabi isn't always easy to come by, but it is matchless for its sweetness and crunch; if you can't get it, use Jerusalem artichoke. The numbers in brackets indicate the weight after peeling and slicing. Serves two to four.

1 small kohlrabi (100g)
½ small swede (100g)
1 medium turnip (80g)
1 small carrot (60g)
1 red chilli, finely chopped
1 tbsp lemon juice
1 tbsp cider vinegar
1½ tsp caster sugar
1½ tbsp rapeseed oil
⅓ tsp salt
25g flaked almonds
2 tsp poppy seeds
20g picked coriander leaves
15g picked dill
50g pomegranate seeds (ie, from half a pomegranate)

Peel and cut the root vegetables into julienne roughly 5cm long and 1-2mm thick, then put in a large bowl with the chilli, lemon juice, vinegar, sugar, oil and salt, and mix. Dry fry the almonds in a small pan for a minute, stirring all the time, add the poppy seeds and fry for another minute (take care the nuts do not over-colour), then set aside. Give the salad a toss, add more salt if need be, and stir in the almonds, poppy seeds and herbs. Transfer into bowls and spoon pomegranate seeds on top.

• Yotam Ottolenghi is chef/patron of <u>Ottolenghi</u> and Nopi in London.