

Artichoke and Toasted Walnut Salad

Because the choke remains undeveloped, once you remove the tough outer leaves from baby artichokes, you only need to simmer them for about 20 minutes and you can eat them whole—hot with olive oil or butter, or cold in a salad. Toasted walnuts or pecans make a delightful contrast of flavor and texture. If you can't find baby artichokes, "turn" large artichokes, simmer until easily penetrated with a skewer, and cut into wedges.

MAKES 6 SIDE-DISH OR FIRST-COURSE SERVINGS IF SERVED ALONE OR PROPORTIONATELY MORE WHEN SERVED WITH OTHER CRUDITÉ SALADS

30 baby artichokes, about 3 pounds, all the same size, (so they cook evenly) or 4 large artichokes

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup walnut halves

3 tablespoons walnut or hazelnut oil made from roasted nuts, or extra virgin olive oil, or more to taste

1 tablespoon sherry vinegar or white wine vinegar, or more to taste

Salt

Pepper

If using baby artichokes, prepare as shown on page 297. If using large artichokes, prepare as shown for artichoke bottoms on page 296. Put the artichokes in a nonaluminum pot with plenty of water to cover and bring to a gentle simmer. Simmer for 15 to 20 minutes, or until a paring knife poked into one of the artichokes goes through with just slight resistance.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350°F. Spread the nuts on a sheet pan and toast in the oven, stirring occasionally, for 10 to 15 minutes, or until they are fragrant and have taken on color. Pour onto a plate and let cool.

Drain the artichokes. If you are using large artichokes, remove the chokes and cut into wedges. Immediately toss the artichokes with the oil, vinegar, and salt and pepper to taste. Just before serving, toss in the nuts (don't toss them in ahead of time or they will lose their crunch). This salad, except for adding the nuts, can be made 2 days in advance.

HOW TO MAKE ARTICHOKE AND TOASTED WALNUT SALAD



1. Scoop the choke out of large artichoke bottoms with a spoon.



2. Cut the bottoms into wedges.



3. Dress with walnut oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper and toss with the walnuts.