



Celery Salad with Dates, Almonds, and Parmigiano

This is one of my favorite dishes. It's so simple, but the combination of ingredients creates a wonderful, intriguing aroma. Try to use really good olive oil for this salad.

» Serves 4

8 celery stalks
(leaves separated and reserved), tough fibers peeled off, sliced on an angle into ¼-inch-thick pieces

4 Medjool dates, pitted and roughly chopped

½ cup roughly chopped toasted almonds (see page 31)

3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

¼ teaspoon dried chile flakes

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 ounces Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, shaved into shards with a vegetable peeler

Extra-virgin olive oil

Put the celery in a bowl of ice water and soak for about 20 minutes to heighten the crispness. Drain and pat dry, then pile into a medium bowl.

Add the celery leaves, dates, almonds, lemon juice, and chile flakes and toss together. Season generously with salt and black pepper. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Add the Parmigiano and ¼ cup olive oil and toss gently. Taste again and adjust the seasoning so you have a lovely salty, tart, sweet balance. Serve cool.