

Throw Something Green on the Grill

By Susie Iventosch

It's that time of year when bundles of flavorful, skinny asparagus spears appear in the markets. The season for fresh asparagus lasts from late February through June, so now is a great time to take advantage and eat it often, before the season elapses. It's especially delicious when grilled and takes barely a minute or two per side to get the right balance of nicely browned, yet al dente. Grilled asparagus is wonderful all by itself, but also with pasta, in salads and even in sandwiches. This sandwich calls for grilled asparagus and grilled green onions, prosciutto, Gorgonzola and Pecorino Romano cheese to create a light mid-week meal. When served over lettuce with vinaigrette, the same ingredients make a fancy salad for a dinner party.

Grilled Asparagus-Prosciutto Sandwiches (Makes six sandwiches)

Ingredients

- 1 pound asparagus, trimmed and cleaned
- 2 bunches green onions, root tips removed
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon white balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon coarse sea salt
- 1 teaspoon ground pepper
- 12 slices of bread, whole wheat or white, crusts trimmed
- 3 ounces prosciutto, sliced
- 3 ounces gorgonzola cheese, crumbled or thinly sliced
- 3 ounces Pecorino Romano cheese, grated, or very thinly sliced
- Extra oil or butter for grilling sandwiches

Grilled asparagus salad

Ingredients

- 1 head romaine lettuce, torn into bite sized pieces
- 1 pound asparagus, trimmed and cleaned
- 2 bunches green onions, root tips removed
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon white balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon coarse sea salt
- 1 teaspoon ground pepper
- 3 ounces prosciutto, sliced
- 3 ounces gorgonzola cheese, crumbled or thinly sliced
- 3 ounces Pecorino Romano cheese, coarsely grated, or very thinly shaved
- 1 recipe white wine vinaigrette dressing (below)

Directions

Place lettuce on plates. Wrap one long piece of prosciutto around three spears of grilled asparagus and put on top of lettuce. Tie grilled green onion in a knot and place over asparagus. Sprinkle with Romano and Gorgonzola cheeses and drizzle dressing over all.



Directions

Clean and trim asparagus and green onions. Place in a Ziploc baggie and season with salt and pepper. Zip bags shut and shake well to distribute seasoning. Add olive oil and balsamic vinegar and zip closed again. Knead baggie to spread oil and vinegar to cover all veggies. Heat barbecue to medium heat and grill veggies for 1-2 minutes per side, until nicely browned, but al dente. Remove from grill and set aside. Meanwhile, trim crust from bread and heat oil or butter in large skillet. Heat oil in pan over medium heat and place each slice of bread in pan, (in several batches, depending on the size of the pan) and place Gorgonzola on half the bread slices and Pecorino Romano on the rest. Heat until cheese begins to melt. On the Romano halves, lay two to three slices prosciutto over cheese, then 4-5 grilled asparagus spears, trimmed to fit bread, and 2-3 onions. Place Gorgonzola bread slices on top, press down with spatula and continue to grill for one to two more minutes. Serve hot.



White Wine Vinaigrette

- 4-5 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 1-2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- ½ cup light olive oil
- 1 small clove garlic, crushed
- ¼ t onion powder
- ½ t salt
- ½ t freshly cracked pepper
(can add more S&P to taste)

Mix all ingredients in a container with a tight-fitting lid and shake vigorously.