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## A Colorful Salad With a Crunch That Can't Be 'Beet'

By Susie Iventosch



Tangled Thai Salad Photo Susie Iventosch

owner of Amy's Whole Food Creations, a personal chef and catering venture. After the appetizers of cubed watermelon drizzled with lime juice and topped with shredded mint, fried won tons with seared ahi and wasabi, and an incredible, highly seasoned feta cheese spread, we were treated to my favorite part of the meal: Amy's Tangled Thai Salad.

First of all, the salad is just beautiful, with long ribbons of beets and all sorts of julienned veggies, dressed in a cilantro-peanut lime dressing and topped with a smorgasbord of nuts, seeds and other interesting things. But it was most fun to watch Amy toss this beautiful salad with all of the long ribbons of beets. Now is where I have to confess, I would never have let a beet touch my lips before this salad, but because I didn't know they were beets, and they didn't taste like beets, I actually enjoyed them!

Ha. You're never too old to learn to like new foods.

Amy, who is a self-taught chef, originally created this salad for a women's Health and Wellness Fair that she catered, and it has evolved ever since to the amazing dish we had the other night.

"I really enjoy the element of surprise in food," Amy said. "I like to surprise people with different flavors, textures and colors. It takes the food experience to another level."

I can certainly say that is true for this Tangled Thai Salad. There are 28 ingredients in this salad, including the dressing.

Amy, who has a degree in biology, learned to love to cook after caring for her one-acre organic farming garden in the Hayward hills. She grew 65 varieties of heirloom tomatoes and all sorts of vegetables, melons, peppers and even tobacco plants and calendula, which are used in the garden as an organic pest control. The stickiness of the tobacco leaves attracts the aphids and other bugs and keeps them from the vegetables. And, apparently, they also have a beautiful blossom.

The one new toy you may need to buy for this salad is a veggie spiralizer to make the long beet ribbons. I ordered the Paderno Spiral Vegetable Slicer on Amazon.com. Be sure to order the 4-blade, as this version comes with the Angle Hair blade and that is what you will want for the beet ribbons. This is my new favorite kitchen toy, and since I am making Potatoes Dauphinoise for my son's upcoming wedding, I am using the flat blade for the potatoes and they have been turning out great!

We were invited to a friend's house for dinner, and I know that my friend, Linda, doesn't really love to cook. But she had a special surprise, and wanted to go ahead and entertain us. When I called to see what we could bring, she rattled off this most amazing-sounding Thai menu ... many things I'd never even heard of before.

Wow, I thought, she must have gone on some sort of cooking binge. I could just envision her slaving over the stove all day. Well, there didn't seem to be a thing I could bring that would accompany this menu, so we settled on bringing some wine.

When we arrived for dinner, we were greeted not only by Linda and Fernand, but also by another young couple that we had never met before, Amy and John. As it turned out, the surprise was a beautiful Thai feast prepared by Amy Klingler,

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