

Wilted Cabbage Salad with Bacon and Cashel Blue Cheese

Serves 6

A warm, wintery salad with savory flavors that entice and win over even those who think they don't like cabbage.

6 small slices of crusty bread,
cut into 1/2-inch cubes
6 tablespoons rendered duck or goose fat
7 ounces bacon, or pancetta cut into 2-inch pieces
1 garlic clove, chopped
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 head Savoy cabbage,
thick stalks removed and leaves sliced
1/2 head radicchio, thinly sliced
7 ounces Cashel or other blue cheese, crumbled

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

To make the croutons, toss the bread cubes in 2 tablespoons of duck or goose fat and spread on a baking sheet. Bake in the preheated oven for about 10 minutes, tossing and turning frequently until they are golden brown and crusty. Remove from the oven and set aside.

To make the dressing, sauté the bacon pieces in 2 tablespoons of duck or goose fat in a large frying pan over medium heat until the bacon is beginning to crisp nicely. Remove the bacon with a slotted spoon to a plate.

Add the garlic to the same pan and fry it gently for 1 minute. Remove from the heat and carefully add the wine vinegar. Scrape the bottom of the pan to loosen any caramelized juices. Taste the hot dressing for salt and add some pepper.

To wilt the cabbage, heat a very large frying pan with the remaining 2 tablespoons duck or goose fat over medium heat. Add the cabbage all at once. Cook, stirring, for about 1-1/2 minutes, or until the cabbage has wilted. Tip into a large bowl.

To serve, add the radicchio, bacon, cheese, and croutons to the warm cabbage and toss with the dressing of wine vinegar and juices.