

Sweet Potatoes with Pecans, Goat Cheese and Celery

Stephanie Collins

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| 4 Tbsp. olive oil, divided | 2 tiny or 1 small shallot |
| 1 ½ lbs. sweet potatoes,
scrubbed, unpeeled, and
cut in ¾- to 1-inch coins | 2 stalks celery |
| Salt and freshly ground black
pepper | 2 Tbsp. flat-leaf parsley |
| ¼ cup pecan halves, toasted
and cooled | 1 Tbsp. dried cranberries or
cherries (optional) |
| | 2 oz. firmish goat cheese (can
use Ricotta or blue cheese) |
| | 2 tsp. red wine vinegar |
| | ½ tsp. smooth Dijon mustard |

Preheat oven to 450°. Coat a large baking sheet generously with olive oil, about 1 to 2 tablespoons. Lay sweet potatoes in one layer on the oiled sheet. Sprinkle with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Roast, without disturbing, for 15 to 20 minutes. Carefully flip each piece: the undersides should be blistery, dark and a bit puffy and should release from the pan with no effort. If they're not, let it cook longer. Sprinkle them with additional salt and freshly ground black pepper and return the pan to the oven for another 10 minutes or so, until the undersides match the tops.

Meanwhile, prepare your salad. Chop your pecans well, mince your shallot, chop your celery and parsley, and mince cranberries if using them. Crumble your goat cheese. *If you, like me, got too soft of a goat cheese for mixing, set it aside and sprinkle it on top. If it's firmer, stir it into the mixture.*

In a small dish, whisk together 2 tablespoons olive oil, red wine vinegar and Dijon mustard. Pour half over salad.

When the sweet potatoes are done, lay them on a serving platter. Scoop a spoonful of the salad over each round. Pour the remaining salad dressing over top, to taste. Eat immediately.

Makes 2 ½ servings.