

LUKAS VOLGER

Picnic Broccoli Salad

A spin on the classic “Southern” or Amish Broccoli Salad that skips the mayo and finds punchy, creamy richness in a miso-based dressing that you may find lots of other applications for. Some versions of this salad use raw broccoli, but I prefer a very brief blanching; if you opt for raw, just be sure to dry the broccoli thoroughly — by blotting with a towel, or running through your salad spinner several times — before tossing it with dressing. It’s also very make-ahead friendly, since the flavors improve as they sit, and is best served well chilled.

Serves 4 to 6

About 2 pounds broccoli (1 bunch), preferably with the stalks

¼ of a small red onion, sliced into paper-thin strips

Pinch salt

Pinch sugar

¼ cup light-flavored oil (avocado, grapeseed, mild olive oil)

2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

1 ½ tablespoons light-colored miso paste

2 teaspoons dijon mustard

1 ½ teaspoons runny honey

3 dates, diced

⅓ cup coarsely chopped, deeply toasted cashews

Big handful thick-cut barbecue flavor potato chips

Separate the broccoli stems from the crowns, then trim the crowns into small florets and pieces. They don’t need to all be perfect little florets; small pieces of the stems (where its skin is tender) are also fine. Discard about a half inch of the dry, cut-end of the stalk, and then use a sharp chef’s knife to thickly peel the fibrous outer skin off. Then cut it into small pieces, about the same size as the florets.

Bring a pot of water to boil. Add the broccoli and blanch for only 30 seconds, which won’t even be enough time for the water to return to boil – the goal is to retain plenty of crunch, and you only need to take the raw edge off. Drain in a colander and rinse under cold water. Then dry very thoroughly by blotting with a clean towel or running through the salad spinner several times.

Place the onion in a large mixing bowl with the sugar and salt, and use your fingers to mix them together. Set aside while you prepare the dressing.

Whisk, or use a small blender, to combine the oil, vinegar, miso, mustard, and honey.

Add the dry broccoli, dates, and dressing to the onions and stir to combine. If you have time, chill the salad for a few hours in the refrigerator. Just before serving, add the cashews, and crumble the potato chips over the top.