

Ash & Basket's Southern Chef Salad

DEEP FRIED DEVILED EGGS

6 hard boiled eggs, peeled
½ cup mayonnaise
3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon lemon juice
½ teaspoon fresh or dried dill
Salt and pepper to taste
Smoked (or regular) paprika (to sprinkle on top)

½ cup all purpose flour
2 eggs, beaten
¾ cup panko breadcrumbs
Vegetable or neutral oil for frying.

Carefully cut eggs in half, and separate yolks from whites. You want to get out all the yellow yolk that you can from the white. I find using a spoon to carefully scoop it out works the best.

Mix together the yolks, mayonnaise, Dijon mustard, lemon juice, dill, salt and pepper until fluffy. Refrigerate until ready, at least half an hour.

Prepare three dishes for breading the white part of the eggs. Flour, with salt and pepper, goes in one dish, the beaten eggs in the next, and finally the panko breadcrumbs in the third. Heat your vegetable oil in a deep, heavy-bottomed skillet. You want a few inches of oil in the bottom of the pan, but no more.

Carefully bread the white part of the eggs by dredging in flour, then egg, and then finally breadcrumb, making sure to properly coat even the inner curve of the egg.

Once oil is hot, fry until each egg is golden brown. Don't overcrowd the pan. Cool eggs on a paper towel lined plate or platter, to help soak up any excess grease.

When eggs are cool, scoop yolk mixture into eggs. Dust tops with smoked (or regular) paprika and serve!

PICKED VEGGIES

½ cup each thinly sliced vegetables, such as carrots, red onions, radishes and cucumbers. I like a combo of carrots, red onions and radishes for this salad.
½ cup seasoned (or unseasoned) rice vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar
2 teaspoons salt

Whisk together vinegar and salt and sugar. Heat together in microwave for thirty seconds to make sure the salt and sugar is fully dissolved.

Mix in vegetables (together or separately) and let sit for up to three days ahead of time. Make sure to chill the veggies thoroughly before serving and keep in the fridge when you're not using them.

DRESSING

½ cup mayonnaise
¼ cup chili sauce (it's not spicy but feel free to substitute ketchup)
3 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons tarragon (or other white) vinegar
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon garlic powder
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
Salt and pepper to taste

Whisk together mayo and chili sauce (or ketchup), sugar, garlic powder, Worcestershire sauce, and vinegar. Slowly drizzle in olive oil until dressing is emulsified and pourable. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

SALAD

One large bag of mixed greens, one head of iceberg, or three or four hearts of romaine, or a mixture of whatever lettuces you prefer. Chopped.

1 seedless cucumber, chopped
1 container of cherry tomatoes or 3-4 roma tomatoes, chopped

6 slices of smoked bacon, fried or baked until crispy, chopped
6 slices of smoked turkey, chopped (or you could use a combo of turkey and ham, or turkey and chicken)
6 oz of smoked cheese (I like smoked gouda here, or you could use smoked cheddar or smoked mozzarella), chopped into cubes

To assemble the salad:

On a large platter, arrange chopped lettuce until it's a thin layer.

Layer over chopped cucumbers and chopped tomatoes (cherry tomatoes you can leave whole, or cut in half if they're large)

Layer on pickled vegetables.

Layer on chopped bacon, turkey, and cheese.

Arrange deep fried deviled eggs along the center of the platter. Serve dressing alongside for drizzling.