



RECIPE for health

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featured food:

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

By Peggy Crum, RD, Health4U Nutritionist

Lined up like little green soldiers with wild leafy tops, the stalks of Brussels sprouts are the last plants standing in my garden. The pepper bushes and zucchini withered with fall's first frost. But cold weather gave my Brussels sprouts a new resolve. As a matter of fact, Brussels sprouts need a good hard frost to develop their sweet, nutty flavor.

Brussels sprouts' first name refers to the city of Brussels in northern Europe where they originated centuries ago. Their last name describes the edible buds that sprout along a heavy stalk to form perfect mini cabbages.

Brussels sprouts are harvested by snapping the individual sprouts from the stalk or by cutting the entire stalk. In the market, whether you find them loose or attached to the stalk, look for sprouts with tight green heads and no yellowing or wilting. If you have a choice, select small sprouts as they will be sweeter than the large ones. When you get them home, pluck the sprouts from the stalk. If you aren't cooking them right away, just keep them like that, outer leaves and all, in an open container in the back of the refrigerator. Over time, you'll notice that the outer leaves wilt to form a protective coat around the rest of the sprout. Stored this way, they will be fine for several weeks if not months.

To prepare your sprouts for cooking, peel away a layer or two of the outer leaves. Next, trim the stem near the bottom leaves but not too close as the stem keeps the sprout intact during cooking. Cut each sprout in half or quarters depending on its size.

Cooking Brussels sprouts in water brings out their bitterness, a challenging taste that has given Brussels sprouts a bad name. Instead, roast your cleaned and cut Brussels sprouts in a hot oven or on the stove top. The crispy outer leaves and smoky sweet interiors just may convert Brussels sprouts nay-sayers for good.

Sweet and Spicy Brussels Sprouts

Recipe developed by Corporate Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski and featured in Residential Dining Services. Serves 4-6

- 2 pounds Brussels sprouts
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1-2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 Tablespoons pure Michigan maple syrup
- 1½ Tablespoons sambal oelek

Sambal oelek or ulek:

Sambal is a chile mixture with over 300 varieties. Oelek means "to crush or grind." Thus, sambal oelek is simply crushed raw chiles with no other additives. Used to add heat to a dish or as a spicy condiment. Find in Asian groceries.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Remove yellowed and wilted outer leaves and wash Brussels sprouts. Trim at the base and cut in half. Put sprouts on a sheet tray. Drizzle oil over the sprouts and season with salt and pepper. Mix gently until sprouts are evenly coated.

Roast in preheated oven for 30-40 minutes or until nicely browned

Meanwhile, combine syrup and sambal oelek; set aside. When sprouts are roasted, remove from oven and place in mixing bowl with reserved mixture. Toss and serve right away.

Try **Sweet and Spicy Brussels Sprouts** for lunch at The Gallery at Snyder/Phillips, Brody Square and Riverwalk Market at Owen on November 14.