

Radish facts:

- Radish is the root of a plant in the mustard family.
- Choose those that feel firm when gently squeezed. If the radish gives to pressure, the interior will likely be pithy instead of crisp. Any attached leaves should be green and crisp.
- Remove and discard leaves and refrigerate radishes in a plastic bag for up to 5 days. Wash and trim root ends just before using. For added crispness, soak radishes in ice water for a couple of hours.

Thai Beef and Radish Salad

1 tablespoon chile paste with garlic
2 teaspoons minced peeled fresh ginger
1 garlic clove, minced
1 lb (1/2-inch-thick) boneless sirloin steak, cut diagonally across grain into thin slices
1 1/2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
1 tablespoon fish sauce
2 teaspoons sugar
* Cooking spray
2 cups sliced radishes
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
1 serrano chile, seeded and finely chopped
8 Bibb lettuce leaves

Combine chile paste, ginger, and garlic in a large zip-top plastic bag; add steak, tossing to coat. Marinate in refrigerator 30 minutes, turning once.

Combine lime juice, fish sauce, and sugar, stirring with a whisk; set dressing aside.

Heat a large nonstick skillet coated with cooking spray over medium-high heat. Remove steak from bag; discard marinade. Add steak to pan; cook 2 minutes or until desired degree of doneness, turning once. Cut steak into 1-inch pieces; place in a medium bowl. Add radishes, cilantro, mint, and serrano. Pour lime juice mixture over beef mixture, tossing to coat. Spoon about 1/3 cup salad into each lettuce leaf, and serve immediately.

Yield: 4 servings (serving size: 2 filled lettuce leaves)

Source: Cooking Light magazine

A Note from the nutritionist: Cooking sprays are usually made with highly refined vegetable oils that can negatively affect your health. Make sure to use cold-pressed oils instead. Unrefined coconut oil or animal fats like clarified butter, duck or goose fats are even better choices since they do not burn as much at higher temperatures.

Chardonnay-Braised Radishes

Cooked radishes turn delicately mild and sweet. Braise them just until tender but not soft. Insert a sharp knife into the radish to check doneness. A properly cooked (but not overdone) radish will easily yield to the knife, but it should stay on the blade without falling off.

1/4 cup minced red onion
1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme
3 cups small radishes (about 1 pound)
1 cup Chardonnay or other dry white wine
1 tablespoon butter
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley

Heat a medium saucepan coated with cooking spray over medium-low heat. Add onion and thyme; cook 3 minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in radishes; cook 1 minute, stirring constantly. Add wine; bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 5 minutes or just until radishes are tender.

Remove radishes from pan with a slotted spoon. Cook wine mixture 2 minutes or until slightly thick, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; stir in butter and salt. Pour wine mixture over radishes, and sprinkle with parsley. Serve immediately.

Yield: 6 servings (serving size: 1/2 cup)

Source: Cooking Light magazine