

Our State eats

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Fried Oyster Salad with Lemon Balsamic Dressing

Yield: 4 servings.

Lemon Balsamic Dressing:

- ½ cup balsamic glaze
- Juice from 2 lemons
- 2 small cloves garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons honey
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- ½ teaspoon fish sauce (optional)

Oysters:

- Vegetable oil (for frying)
- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- ½ cup flour
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- ⅔ cup whole buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon hot sauce
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 24 raw oysters, drained and patted dry on paper towels

Salad:

- 8 cups mixed baby greens, washed and patted dry
- 6 slices crisp-cooked bacon, crumbled (for garnish)
- ¼ red onion, thinly sliced (for garnish)
- Fresh lemon wedges (for garnish)

For the dressing: In a blender, combine balsamic glaze, lemon juice, garlic, salt, honey, vegetable oil, and fish sauce. Process until smooth. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

For the oysters: Fill a large heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven with at least 2 inches of oil and heat to 350°. In a medium bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, and paprika. In a second bowl, combine buttermilk, hot sauce, and salt. Whisk to blend.



Working with 6 oysters at a time, dip the oysters first in the buttermilk mixture, then allow any excess to drip off before dredging them in the cornmeal mixture. Repeat with the remaining oysters. Fry the oysters in the hot oil in batches, turning once, until golden brown and floating on the surface of the oil, about 1½ minutes. Transfer with a slotted spoon or tongs to a paper towel-lined plate to drain.

For the salad: Divide the greens among 4 large salad bowls or plates. Top the lettuce with the oysters. Place onion slices on each salad and a wedge of lemon on each dish. Then drizzle the dressing over each salad. Crumble the bacon over each salad and serve immediately.

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