

PAN-ROASTED ROMANESCO WITH HAZELNUTS & CRISPY BITS

Serves 3-4

INGREDIENTS:

21 medium head Romanesco (about 1 1/2 to 2 lbs), trimmed
Salt
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/4 cup skin-on or blanched hazelnuts, coarsely chopped
2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1/2 cup chopped parsley
2 teaspoons white wine vinegar
1 lemon
Flaky sea salt (optional)
Freshly ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS

Cut Romanesco into 3/4"-thick slabs. The edges will crumble and smaller florets will break away, and that's good. Break up the bigger slabs a bit with a knife or your hands and cut loose pieces into 1" florets. (The goal is to create some slab pieces that will make maximum contact with the pan and some florets that will get crispy-crunchy.) Season everything with salt.

Heat a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons olive oil and warm until hot, but not smoking. Add Romanesco, cut side down, and cook until deep golden brown, 3-5 minutes. Stir with tongs or a wooden spoon, adding a drizzle more oil and adjusting the heat as necessary. Cook for another 3-5 minutes, checking for doneness and adjusting seasoning. You want the Romanesco to be tender, but still have some crunch. Avoid mush. (If your pan is too hot and you're worried about burning, add 1-2 tablespoons of water or chicken stock to prevent scorching.)

Transfer Romanesco to a bowl. Return pan to medium-high heat and add butter, hazelnuts, and garlic, and cook, stirring and adjusting the heat, until butter is browned and hazelnuts are toasted, about 3 minutes. Add parsley and vinegar and stir up any browned bits. Spoon brown butter mixture over Romanesco and toss to combine. Squeeze juice from 1/2 of lemon and toss again. Taste and add more lemon, sea salt or kosher salt, and some freshly ground pepper until Romanesco is bright and zingy and well-salted.