



Red Chile Caesar Salad

SERVES 8

The city of Chimayo, New Mexico is known for growing some of the best red chiles in North America. Chimayan chiles get their earthy and pungent flavor from the unique soil in the fields surrounding the historic city north of Santa Fe. I purchase bags of the ground chile powder when I visit, and one of my favorite ways to use it is in this Caesar salad, both in the dressing and the garlicky croutons. You can use any of your favorite red chile powders for this recipe, but if you can't get Chimayan, you can order it on Amazon. If I'm serving a crowd, I tear the lettuce and toss the salad, but for smaller gatherings I like to serve whole lettuce leaves drizzled with dressing and a knife and fork.

INGREDIENTS

Salad:

Inner leaves of 3 to 4 heads of red or green Romaine lettuce

Red Chile Caesar dressing

Chile-Garlic Croutons

1/2 cup shaved parmesan cheese

Dressing:

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 anchovy fillets

1 teaspoon kosher salt

2 teaspoons mustard powder

1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

1 egg

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese

1/3 cup red wine vinegar

1 tablespoon ground red chile

1 cup olive oil

Croutons:

3 cloves fresh garlic, minced

1/3 cup olive oil

1 loaf rustic bread

2 teaspoons ground red chile

2 teaspoons kosher salt

PROCESS:

Dressing:

For dressing, place all ingredients except for the oil in a food processor (or blender). While the food processor is running, slowly add the olive oil. Refrigerate until ready to use.

**Croutons:**

For croutons, preheat oven to 350 degrees. With a serrated knife, trim crust off bread and discard. Tear bread into 2" pieces. In a small bowl mix together the garlic and the olive oil. Place the bread in a medium bowl and drizzle with the garlic-oil mixture. Toss to combine well. Sprinkle the ground red chile and the salt over the bread and toss to thoroughly coat. Spread the seasoned croutons on a baking sheet and bake for about 15-20 minutes, or until crisp and golden.

Salad:

Tear lettuce into bite-size pieces and put into a large salad bowl. Add croutons and Parmesan cheese. Drizzle dressing over salad and gently toss. Alternatively, you can place whole lettuce leaves on salad plates and drizzle with dressing. Serve right away.