

Frisee Salad with Lardons and Poached Eggs

(Recipe adapted from *The Gourmet Cookbook*, printed in *Gourmet* February 1999)

Ingredients:

1/2 pound frisée (French curly endive)
6 ounces slab bacon or thick-cut bacon slices (about 6 slices)
2 tablespoons distilled white vinegar
4 large eggs
2 tablespoons shallot, chopped
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar

Directions:

Tear frisee into bite-sized pieces and place in a large bowl. If using slab bacon, cut lengthwise into 1/4 inch thick slices. Then cut bacon slices crosswise into 1/4 inch thick strips (these are your lardons).

In a heavy skillet over medium heat, cook bacon, stirring occasionally. Remove skillet from heat when bacon is golden and beginning to crisp. Set skillet aside.

In another skillet, place 1 inch of warm water and set aside. Fill up a 4-quart saucepan halfway with water and stir in white vinegar. Bring liquid to a simmer. Break each egg into a teacup one at a time and slide into simmering liquid. Immediately push white around yolk with a slotted spoon, working gently. Egg should be oval in shape and yolk should be completely covered by white. Using the same method, add the remaining 3 eggs. Simmer eggs for about 1 1/2 minutes for runny yolks up to about 3 minutes for firmer yolks. Immediately transfer eggs to skillet of warm water.

Reheat bacon in its skillet over medium heat. Add shallot and cook for about 1 minute, stirring often. Add red wine vinegar and boil 5 seconds. Immediately pour hot dressing over frisée and toss with salt and pepper to taste.

Divide salad among 4 plates and top with drained poached eggs. Season eggs with salt and pepper and serve immediately.

Yield: 4 servings