

octo vinaigrette

MAKES ABOUT 1 CUP

From Kevin Pemoulie, creator of this vinaigrette, one of the world's finest condiments and food-improvers—a sauce so good it makes anything taste better:

So, the “octo vin” is how she’s formally known. I think of it as an interesting flip-flop of a traditional vinaigrette in that the ratio of vinegar to oil is reversed. It’s designed to hold up to the char of the octopus and to dress the seaweed, which, unlike lettuces, requires a very forceful, pungent sauce. I wish my prom date had worn a pungent dress.

If we used this to dress a salad, it would probably be too strong. However, it is really fucking delish with meats: grilled or fried. We served it once with whole fried sole. We’ve served it with grilled hamachi collar. And, obviously, the Fried Chicken (page 89).

Combine the garlic, ginger, chile, vinegar, soy, grapeseed oil, sesame oil, sugar, and a few turns of black pepper in a lidded container and shake well to mix. This will keep in the fridge for 4 to 5 days, and is good on everything except ostrich eggs, which is really more the ostrich’s fault than the vinaigrette’s.



NOTE: When preparing the garlic and ginger for this recipe, make sure to take your time and work your knife skills: small, even pieces of garlic and ginger (not the mush that a garlic press or a ginger grater creates) really make a difference. Big bits of raw garlic can have an acrid sting; chunks of ginger will deliver a too-spicy blast and can be unpleasantly fibrous.

2 tablespoons finely chopped garlic

2 tablespoons chopped peeled fresh ginger

¼ teaspoon finely chopped Pickled Chiles (page 68), or 1 fresh bird’s eye-chile, seeded and chopped

¼ cup rice wine vinegar

¼ cup usukuchi (light soy sauce)

2 tablespoons grapeseed or other neutral oil

¼ teaspoon Asian sesame oil

1½ tablespoons sugar

Freshly ground black pepper