DIRECT · EASY

Grilled Watermelon with Feta, Mint and Balsamic Reduction

Watermelon wedges seared over live coals: the sugars caramelize at the edges while the centre stays cool and juicy. Salty feta, fresh mint and a thread of balsamic make a sweet-savoury summer dessert-salad.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
15 min	10 min	6	250 °C

Ingredients

- **1/2 ud** small seedless watermelon (about 1.5 kg)
- **150 g** feta cheese
- **1 puñado** fresh mint leaves
- **100 ml** balsamic vinegar (to reduce)
- **1 cda** honey
- **3 cda** extra virgin olive oil
- **1 pizca** flaky sea salt (Maldon-style)
- **1 ud** lime (zest and a squeeze of juice)

Method

1 REDUCE THE BALSAMIC

In a small pan, bring the balsamic vinegar and honey to a gentle simmer. Lower the heat and reduce for 6-8 minutes, without stirring too much, until it coats the back of a spoon as a light syrup. Take it off: it will thicken further as it cools. Do this indoors while the kamado stabilizes.

2 LIGHT THE KAMADO

Set the kamado up for direct cooking, no deflector, with the grate in place so it heats up. Stabilize at 240-260 °C. Scrub the grate well and wipe it with a lightly oiled paper towel: a clean, hot grate is the difference between searing and the watermelon sticking.

3 CUT AND DRY

Cut the watermelon into 2-3 cm thick wedges, with or without rind (the rind makes them easier to handle). Pat both faces very dry with kitchen paper: the less surface water, the better they caramelize. Brush each side with a little olive oil.

4 SEAR OVER THE COALS

Lay the wedges on the hot grate and leave them alone for 2-3 minutes: they should release on their own once the marks form. Flip and repeat for another 2-3 minutes. You want caramelized edges and golden grill marks, not fully cooked fruit; the centre should stay just warm.

5 BUILD THE PLATE

Move the watermelon to a board or large platter, overlapping the wedges. Crumble the feta over the top by hand, in irregular pieces, and scatter the torn mint leaves. Work while it is warm so the cheese takes the edge off against the fruit.

6 DRESS AND SERVE

Drizzle with threads of balsamic reduction and a little extra virgin olive oil. Finish with flaky salt, lime zest and a squeeze of its juice. Serve straight away, warm, so the contrast between hot watermelon and cool feta is at its best.

Editor's tips

- Dry the watermelon thoroughly before searing: surface water steams off and stops it from caramelizing. Be generous with kitchen paper on both faces.
- A screaming-hot cast-iron grate holds heat better and leaves deeper, sharper grill marks than the standard grate.
- No feta? Ricotta salata or halloumi work just as well (grill the halloumi for a few seconds too).

Gear for this recipe

Big Green Egg Large

The Big Green Egg Large is the heart of this recipe: its thick ceramic holds a dry, stable fire at 240-260 °C, exactly what watermelon needs to caramelize at the edges in a couple of minutes without turning to mush. Unlike gas, there is no steam or damp flare-up to soften the fruit, and the Large size gives you plenty of room to sear many wedges in one go.

mikamado.es/en/kamados/big-green-egg-large

Orework Spanish Holm Oak Charcoal 15 kg

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/orework-encina-espanola-15kg

Big Green Egg Cast Iron Cooking Grid Large (35 cm)

This cast-iron grate for the Large is key to getting deep grill marks on the watermelon. Iron stores far more heat than the standard steel grate and dumps it into the fruit on contact, so it sears and caramelizes before the watermelon can weep. Screaming hot and lightly oiled, the wedges release on their own and come off with the golden bars that make this dish.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/bge-cast-iron-cooking-grid-large

Boska Friends L Round Serving Board Oak 55 cm

A large serving board turns this dessert-salad into a centrepiece. The round 55 cm oak Boska Friends L gives you room to overlap the watermelon wedges, crumble the feta and scatter the mint without crowding. The wood gently takes the chill edge off the just-grilled fruit and keeps the warm-cool contrast intact as you serve straight from the board.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/boska-friends-l-roble-55

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/sandia-parrilla-feta-menta-kamado

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