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## **ROASTED PUMPKIN PANZANELLA WITH CHILI CROUTONS**

David Suarez

### **Croutons:**

- 1/4 cup unsalted butter**
- 6 cups day-old bread, cut into 1½-inch cubes**
- 1/2 teaspoon red chili powder**
- Salt**

### **Salad:**

- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced**
- 1/4 cup Sherry vinegar**
- 1 sugar pumpkin (about 4 pounds), peeled, seeded and cut in 1½-inch chunks**
- 6 ounces shiitake mushrooms, sliced**
- 6 ounces oyster mushrooms, sliced**
- 1/2 cup plus 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1/2 cup pepitas (hulled pumpkin seeds)**
- 4 cups watercress leaves, packed**
- 3 cups radicchio sliced into 1/4-inch ribbons**
- 2 plum tomatoes, cored, seeded, and chopped**
- 1/2 cup crumbled queso fresco**
- Salt and pepper**

- **Make croutons:** Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat and cook until it foams. Immediately add bread and toss well to coat. Transfer to baking sheet and sprinkle with chili powder and salt. Bake croutons until crisp and lightly brown, about 15 minutes, stirring once. Set aside and cool.
- **Make salad:** Increase oven to 450 degrees. Place sliced onions and vinegar in a medium bowl. Add a pinch of salt and set aside. In a large roasting pan, toss pumpkin and mushrooms with 1/4 cup oil and season with salt and pepper. Spread vegetables in a single layer and bake until pumpkin is tender and mushrooms are browned, about 25 minutes. While vegetables roast, place pepitas in a dry skillet over medium-high heat. Cook, stirring continuously, until lightly brown and fragrant. Set aside.
- **Make dressing:** Whisk 1/2 cup of oil into reserved bowl of vinegar and onions. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
- **Assemble components:** In a large bowl, combine roasted pumpkin, mushrooms and croutons. Add vinaigrette, watercress, radicchio and tomatoes and toss to coat.
- **Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with toasted pepitas and queso fresco. Serve immediately.**