

## *Awraq al-silq* - Swiss Chard Rolls and Pomegranate Stem Salad

Swiss chard is a supreme source of vitamins K, A, and C and a good source of magnesium, potassium, iron, and dietary fiber.

Ingredients for the rolls:

4 onions, chopped (about 2 cups)

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

½ cup dry-roasted pine nuts, plus ¼ cup for garnish

2 bunches fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped

¼ teaspoon Aleppo pepper, or 1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon ground allspice

3 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped, plus 9 garlic cloves, peeled and

whole

1 cup coarse bulgur

36 swiss chard leaves, blanched

2 tomatoes sliced (optional)

½ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (2 to 3 lemons)

1 tablespoon dried mint, or ½ cup chopped fresh mint

½ teaspoon kosher salt

2 teaspoons sugar or, 1 teaspoon agave

Ingredients for Pomegranate vinaigrette:

2 tablespoons pomegranate molasses

1 tablespoon organic apple cider vinegar or lemon juice

1 tablespoon agave

½ cup olive oil

½ teaspoon Aleppo pepper, or ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper

½ teaspoon pink Himalayan sea salt

2 tablespoons fresh chopped mint

Pomegranate seeds, for garnish

1. To make the filling: sauté the onions in 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a medium saucepan over low heat for 5-6 minutes, or until they turn translucent. Add the pine nuts, parsley, Aleppo pepper, cinnamon, allspice, the 3 chopped garlic cloves, and the chopped

tomatoes, if using. Transfer the mixture to a medium bowl, add the rice, and stir to combine.

2. To stuff the leaves: pat them dry. Flatten one leaf on a cutting board, vein side up. Cut off the stem. Spread 1 heaping teaspoon of filling across 2 inches of the center of the leaf, near the stem. Fold the stem end over the filling. Fold the sides in, and roll up tightly. Squeeze gently with the palm of your hand to ensure that the filling is compacted well. Repeat with the remaining leaves. (At this point, the stuffed leaves may be frozen to be served later. They will keep for 2 weeks.)
3. To cook the stuffed swiss chard leaves: drizzle the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil on the bottom of a large saucepan and add 3 whole garlic cloves. Pack the stuffed leaves tightly in the pan. Wedge the remaining 6 whole garlic cloves between the stuffed leaves.
4. In a small dish, combine the lemon juice, mint, salt, and sugar, if desired. Pour over the grape leaves. Add enough water to fill the pan three-quarters full.

5. Place a heatproof plate on top of the stuffed leaves to weigh them down. Bring the liquid to a boil over medium-high heat, and then reduce the heat to low. Cover the pot and simmer for at least 45 minutes, or until most of the liquid is absorbed. Let the leaves cool in the pan. The leaves can be served at room temperature or chilled.

The blanched stems from the swiss chard leaves can be served along side the rolls. chopped into 1 ½ to 2 inch pieces and mixed with 2 tablespoons of pomegranate vinaigrette topped with pomegranate seeds and a sprig of fresh mint.