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SALAD WITH BLACK BEAN CAKES, AVOCADO, JICAMA, FRUIT AND HONEY-LIME DRESSING

Black bean cakes:

- 2 cans (about 15 oz. each) black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 cup minced onion
- 1 tbsp. minced Anaheim or jalapeno pepper
- 2 tsp. minced garlic
- 1/4 cup flour
- 4 tbsp. oil
- Flour for dusting

Combine drained black beans in a bowl with the onion, minced pepper, garlic and flour. Mash the ingredients with your hands until smooth and well mixed (plastic gloves are recommended). Shape into 8 to 10 patties about 1 inch thick. Set aside while preparing the dressing and salad.

Honey-lime dressing:

- 2 tbsp. cider vinegar
- 2 tbsp. lime juice
- 1 tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp. coarse-ground black pepper
- 3/4 cup flavorless oil such as safflower or canola

Combine all ingredients and whisk well.

Salad:

- 1 cup peeled jicama cut into strips 2 inches long and 1/4 inch wide
- 1 cup sliced strawberries
- 2 cups cubed papaya
- 10 cups mixed salad greens such as mesclun, spinach and romaine
- Sea salt
- 1 avocado, halved and cut into 16 slices
- 1/2 cup fresh salsa

Combine jicama, strawberries and papaya in a bowl and toss gently with half the dressing.

To finish salad: For the black bean cakes, heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Dust patties with flour and fry in hot oil for about 2 minutes on each side, just until exterior becomes crusty. Transfer to a lightly greased baking sheet and bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes to warm through.

For the salad: Arrange greens on four dinner plates or large, shallow salad bowls. Drizzle with half of the remaining dressing. Season with sea salt. Spoon fruit mixture around outer edges of each salad. Arrange 4 slices of avocado in spokes on each salad and center with two bean cakes. Top each with salsa. Pass remaining dressing at the table. Makes 4 large salads.

Note: For a more substantial entrée, each salad may be topped with 4 to 6 oz. of grilled and sliced flat-iron steak.

Adapted from a recipe in "Salad Days" by Marcel Desaulniers.