

# CELERY and FENNEL with WALNUTS and BLUE CHEESE

*Serves 4 to 6*

I love celery and want you to, too. Aside from its extremely crunchy texture, gorgeous neon-green color, and crisp, green flavor, it's super affordable and I know you probably have a bunch hanging out in your drawer anyway. I would be very happy with a salad made from just thinly sliced celery, lots of lemon, salt, and pepper (I do this all the time!). The point is that you can go a little bit high-low here and maybe dress up that frugal celery with some admittedly less frugal walnuts and a fancy blue cheese, and it still won't break the bank. This salad, with equal parts clean and crisp/rich and creamy, is ideal for pairing with a simple roasted chicken (or turkey).

**½ cup toasted walnuts, coarsely chopped**

**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

**4 celery stalks, with leaves, thinly sliced on the bias**

**1 large fennel bulb, trimmed and thinly sliced lengthwise**

**½ small shallot, thinly sliced**

**2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, plus more as needed**

**¼ cup olive oil, plus more as needed and for drizzling**

**1 ½ ounces firm blue cheese, such as Bayley Hazen or Valdeon, or a mild Stilton, thinly sliced or crumbled**

1. Toss the walnuts with a bit of olive oil so they are nicely coated, then season with salt and pepper and set aside.
2. Toss the celery stalks (reserve the leaves for garnish), fennel, shallot, and lemon juice in a large bowl; season with salt and pepper. Drizzle with the olive oil and season with enough lemon juice to make it very tangy.
3. Transfer to a large serving platter or large shallow bowl and top with the walnuts, cheese, celery leaves, and another drizzle of olive oil and plenty of pepper.



