

# Ruby Endive Salad with Arugula, Apples, Figs, Sugared Pecans, and Boursin Cheese

By Susie Iventosch



Photo Susie Iventosch

This salad says everything about the season! It's a harmonious blend of sweet, tangy, peppery, and creamy flavors with a lot of crunchy elements. Crisp, slightly bitter ruby endive and peppery arugula pair with the natural sweetness of juicy figs and tart apple slices. The Boursin cheese offers a rich, herby contrast as well as a great base for arranging the endive. The crowning touch is the sugared pecans, bringing

a satisfying crunch and a hint of caramelized sweetness to every bite. This salad is a perfect mix of textures and flavors, ideal for a light lunch or an elegant

starter that celebrates the best of autumn's produce. The Boursin cheese is delicious with this salad, but it also serves as the "glue" to keep the endive leaves in place so you can arrive at a beautiful salad, resembling a flower arrangement. I just pushed the base end of the endive leaves into the cheese to hold them in place. The same method keeps the very thin apple slices standing upright, too. Then, simply arrange the figs and sprinkle the pecan bites over the top before dressing with a light Dijon vinaigrette. You can make this salad on individual salad plates or one larger serving platter.

Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977. Or visit <https://treksandbites.com>



## INGREDIENTS

### Salad Fixings

- 2 cups arugula leaves
- 1-2 heads ruby endive
- 3-4 figs, cut into quarters or small pieces
- 1 crisp red apple (Honeycrisp or Fuji), very thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup Boursin Garlic & Fine Herbs cheese

### Sugared Pecans

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 cup pecan halves
- 2 tbsp. sugar (white or brown)
- 1/4 tsp. cardamom
- 1/8 tsp. salt

### Dijon Vinaigrette

- Shake the following ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 1/2 tsp. lemon pepper
- 1/4 cup wine vinegar (red or white)
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

### DIRECTIONS

Arrange a nest of arugula in the center of each salad plate, or a larger serving platter. Mound a scoop of Boursin cheese on top in the center of the arugula. Carefully stick the base of the endive leaves into the cheese, forming a sort of flower look. The Boursin serves as a way to keep the endive in place. Wedge the thinly sliced apples in between the endive leaves. Sprinkle the candied pecans evenly over the greens and place fig quarters on the plate. Drizzle the vinaigrette evenly over everything and season with freshly ground salt and pepper.

To make the sugared pecans, heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a skillet and add the pecans. Cook over medium-low heat until the pecans become fragrant and begin to brown. Then, sprinkle the sugar over the pecans and continue to cook just until the sugar is melted. Remove from heat and toss the spices and salt over the sugared pecans; cool completely before adding to the salad. I normally cook the pecan halves and then break them into small pieces before serving.



# Local teens swim to raise awareness and funds to fight ovarian cancer when it hits too close to home

By Vera Kochan



Photo Vera Kochan

From left, Brody Suba, Asha Spitzer, Berit Holms Suba, and Cael Suba all wearing ovarian cancer awareness t-shirts.

Campolindo High School junior, Asha Spitzer (16) joined forces with Miramonte High School junior Brody Suba (16) and his freshman brother Cael (14) in helping to bring awareness to ovarian cancer after the boys' mother and aunt were both diagnosed in 2021.

According to Berit Holms Suba, the boys' mom, "Brody and Cael noticed the disparity be-

tween awareness campaigns around well-funded colon cancer and breast cancer research, but never saw or heard anything about ovarian cancer awareness. They also noticed their aunt and mom have been using breast cancer meds which aren't completely effective in the fight against ovarian cancer because of the lack of resources around ovarian

cancer. There are just not a lot of drug options for the patients."

All three teens have participated as swim teammates since 2013, so fundraising through swimming-related activities was an easy decision. Also high on their list was to bring attention to a disease that went misdiagnosed for both Berit (48) and her sister, Brigid Holms (52), who lives in Connecticut.

"My sister was vomiting for a year and tried to get help, but it was during COVID and tough to be seen by a doctor," explained Berit. "I experienced bloating and felt pain on my right side. I went into Urgent Care and was treated for a urinary tract infection. The x-ray showed a kidney stone, and they thought that was the problem. After still getting the pain, I had an ultra sound where an 18-centimeter tumor was discovered."

After a successful hysterectomy with

follow-up chemotherapy, Berit was pronounced cancer-free. However, it wasn't long before some tumors returned. Besides chemo, she has had radiation treatments and will soon go to Houston, Texas to participate in clinical trial treatments. Brigid is also still fighting the disease.

"I felt the injustice that a wonderful person like Berit has to battle this disease," stated Spitzer. "She was always a presence for helping at swim meets. I was 14 when she was diagnosed, and I felt helpless to fix the issue. It seemed natural to do something that was swimming-related."

Spitzer opened a GoFundMe account that raised approximately \$10,000 for the Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance (OCRA) through her participation in the Escape from Alcatraz event. Over the last three years she swam with a kayak escort from the island in

the San Francisco Bay all the way to Aquatic Park. She plans to participate in other events in order to support Brody and Cael's fundraising efforts.

The Suba brothers took their lead from Berit's idea to create Ovarian Cancer Equity and established a website geared toward community support for patients, awareness campaigns through educational events, and research fundraising in order to "accelerate the development of alternative therapies due to the disease's resistance to standard treatments."

"It was scary," said Brody when the boys first learned of their mother's diagnosis. During the interview for this article, both boys were wearing teal-colored t-shirts bearing the words "I wear teal for Mom." Unlike the popular color of pink for breast cancer awareness, teal has not had the deserved expo-

sure for ovarian cancer awareness, something the boys would like to change.

Besides working on a letter-writing campaign to members of congress, Brody and Cael plan on "contacting famous people who have been struck with ovarian cancer for their support."

The teens held a 20-mile virtual walk/run/bike/swim in September (ovarian cancer awareness month) to raise funds. "Five people participated," Brody explained "We did the swim part, and the others did the rest. People could donate whatever they could, and we're keeping the competition open until Dec. 31." So far the fundraiser has taken in about \$2,000. For more information about their website visit: [www.ovarian-cancerequity.org](http://www.ovarian-cancerequity.org). For information about symptoms visit: [OvarianCancerProject.org](http://OvarianCancerProject.org).

# Monthly Cars & Coffee enlivens Lafayette Christian Church

By Elaine Borden Chandler



Photo Elaine Borden Chandler

A visitor admires two Ford Thunderbirds at the Burton Valley Cars & Coffee on Aug. 24.

The idea came from a book — though perhaps not the one that you're thinking of. About a year ago, the Lafayette Christian Church's study group read "Healing the Heart of Democracy" by Parker J. Palmer. They were struck by the statement that churches should develop a theology of hospitality that extends beyond their congregation and into their broader community.

Led by Stephanie Reilly, they started brainstorming and began to hold events for the

larger Lamorinda community. Among these were free coffee and doughnuts along the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail, concerts in the grove, and a book fair. One day, David Dell and Kyle Koegler suggested that they host a Cars and Coffee, an auto enthusiast tradition where people come together to display their cars, talk, drink coffee, and eat doughnuts. As car enthusiasts themselves, Dell and Koegler became the driving force behind the new Burton

Valley Cars & Coffee.

"They got the posters and banners done, everything," said Reilly. "The only thing I did was go down and get the doughnuts from Johnny's Donuts."

Despite a few sprinklings of rain, the Burton Valley Cars & Coffee was so popular that Reilly had to get a second round of doughnuts. In addition to those who specifically came to see the cars, many people walking by on the trail stopped to join in. Visitors chatted with the car owners, asking them about their cars, what kind of enhancements they had done, and why they had chosen that particular car.

Many of the cars had stories behind them, such as coming from family members or being a lifelong dream. They were a mix of classic, vintage, and modern cars such as Thunderbirds, Mustangs, Audis, and Ford trucks. Some of owners brought cars that had been given a lot of restoration or enhancements including Koegler,

who brought a car that was much admired for how it had been painted and tricked out.

As the event came to an end, some of the car owners told the church organizers that the event had been so great that they wanted it to happen again. After a quick check that the parking lot was free, the congregation decided to have Cars & Coffee on the fourth Saturday of the month.

"My own son, who doesn't get too excited about much except cars, said, 'We got to do this again.' In fact, he keeps reminding me there's one this month. And I go, 'Yeah, I'm well aware of that,'" said Reilly.

At present, the Lafayette Christian Church is going to sponsor Cars & Coffee in October and November. They'll take a pause in December for the Christmas season and then decide in January if they want to make this a monthly event. They are hopeful that the events will be popular enough to make it part of their

2025 community outreach plan.

The next Burton Valley Cars & Coffee will be on Oct. 26, from 8 a.m to

11 a.m. at the Lafayette Community Church at 584 Glenside Drive. All types of cars and visitors are welcome.

## TREKS & BITES SPICE BLENDS

"TASTE THE ADVENTURE IN EVERY BOTTLE"



Available at Diablo Foods in the Spice Section or @ [treksandbites.com](http://treksandbites.com)