
CARAMELIZED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

The trick to these Brussels sprouts is to sear their cut edges on a blazing hot baking sheet; it mimics the heat generated by a hot skillet but without the fuss, and results in delicately browned, caramelized sprout bottoms. It's important to tuck any stray leaves in the middle of the sprouts rather than leaving them on the perimeter, or they will burn.

Caraway seeds have long been used to relieve stomach bloating; they are often paired with members of the cabbage family (which many consider hard on the stomach) as a digestive aid. I add them to this dish because they complement the earthy flavor of the sprouts, but if they help in digestion too, that is an added bonus.

Serves 2

225 grams (1/2 pound) young, small Brussels sprouts, woody bottoms trimmed, halved
30 milliliters (2 tablespoons) extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon caraway seeds
15 milliliters (1 tablespoon) lemon juice

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F convection or 450°F regular.
2. Place an empty baking sheet in the oven to heat up for at least 15 minutes in the hot oven. The sheet may warp but it will return to normal once it cools off.
3. In a bowl, toss the sprouts with 15 milliliters (1 tablespoon) of the olive oil, the salt, the pepper, and the caraway seeds. Massage well to distribute the seasonings.
4. Place a piece of parchment paper on the counter. Spread the sprouts on it and take a moment to make sure they lie flat, cut side down, on the paper. This is THE KEY to the success of the dish: the cut side of the sprouts needs to be in contact with the preheated baking sheet. Tuck any stray leaves in the middle of the sprouts to prevent them from burning.
5. Carefully remove the hot baking sheet from the oven. Transfer the sprouts, still on the parchment paper, to the hot baking sheet. Immediately put the baking sheet back in the hot oven.
6. Roast the sprouts for 10 minutes, or until richly caramelized on the bottom.

7. If the sprouts on the edges are coloring more quickly than those in the middle, take a moment to move them around, and return to the oven for a few more minutes until the remaining sprouts have also caramelized.
8. Remove to a serving platter, sprinkle with the lemon juice and the remaining 15 milliliters (1 tablespoon) of olive oil, and serve hot, warm, or at room temperature.