



Home on the Range



Cool Summer Salads

The hot days and warm nights of summer call for easy-to-make, easy-to-eat salads.

Add protein and vegetables to a simple potato, pasta or greens-based salad and you have a meal. Grated or cubed cheeses or canned fish like salmon, tuna, crab and shrimp are perfect choices.

Check out the supermarket produce aisle or your favorite roadside stand for the season's best produce—from artichokes to zucchini. Marinated products like canned olives, pickles or pimientos add extra zest, color and intense flavor. Seasoning blends take the guesswork out of a trip to the spice rack.

The following salad recipes feature some variations on old favorites, as well as some new ideas for light main dish salads that require minimal cooking—perfect for a summer meal!

Salad Bites

- Wash greens thoroughly. Place them in a sink filled with lukewarm water and swish around; tepid water helps to remove the grit faster than cool water. Remove any roots and stems from the greens, if necessary. Whirl in a salad spinner or pat dry in paper towels.
- Canned fish is a great source of protein, calcium and Omega 3 fatty acids. The small zip-top cans are great to keep in a desk drawer at the office or in the car. Pick up a side salad at a fast-food restaurant, and top it with this convenient and delicious source of low-fat protein.
- Add flavor and color to pasta, potato or lettuce-based salads by tossing in strips of pimiento. This large, red, heart-shaped sweet pepper is available canned and stores conveniently on your pantry shelf.
- Simple vinaigrette is usually a 3:1 ratio of oil to vinegar. Vary the taste by selecting balsamic vinegar, flavored vinegars or citrus juices. Popular seasoning blends can add zest to any dressing.
- Sprinkle seasoning blends on a skinless, boneless chicken breast or fish fillet and grill. (Do ahead, freeze or refrigerate; use when needed.) Serve on top of salad greens.

Know Your Greens

Arugula or rocket salad—A tender, mustard-flavored green with a bitter flavor is a favorite salad ingredient in many European countries. It is sold in small bunches which should be fresh and bright green.

Boston/Bibb lettuce—Also known as Butterhead, this head-type lettuce is characterized by light green, flexible leaves and a mild flavor.

Cabbage—Three varieties are common in the United States. Green or domestic cabbage has a round head and is light green with compact leaves. Red cabbage has a round head with purple-red, compact leaves. It is sweeter than domestic cabbage. Savoy cabbage has a round to oblong head with loosely compact, crinkled leaves. It is a pale green color.

Iceberg lettuce—Iceberg lettuce is the most common lettuce used in the United States. It is characterized by compact heads,

light green color, crisp texture and delicate flavor.

Leaf lettuce—Leaf lettuce has loosely bunched, curly leaves with crisp texture. Both green and red leaf lettuces are available. Red leaf lettuce is characterized by green leaves with red-tinged edges.

Radicchio—This salad green has a compact head consisting of maroon-red leaves with white veins. Radicchio flavor is distinct and slightly bittersweet. Soak radicchio in cold water for 10 minutes for a less intense flavor.

Romaine lettuce—Used most often in Caesar Salads, Romaine is a head-type lettuce consisting of long, loaf-shaped, narrow leaves with very crisp texture.

Spinach—To prepare spinach, wash the leaves well; then remove the stems by folding each leaf lengthwise along the stem with its underside facing you and pull the stem down as close to the leaf tip as possible.

Mandarin Salmon Spinach Salad With Poppy Seed Dressing

The delicious taste of the Orient comes alive in this incredible mandarin salmon spinach salad with a tangy poppy seed dressing.

- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1/2 teaspoon poppy seeds
- 4 cups torn spinach
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced in rings
- 11 ounces mandarin orange segments, drained
- 8 ounces sliced water chestnuts, drained
- 6 ounces skinless/ boneless pink salmon, drained

In small bowl combine vinegar, sugar, oil and poppy seeds. Set Dressing aside. Place spinach in shallow salad bowl. Combine onions, mandarin oranges and water chestnuts over spinach. Spoon on salmon. To serve, pour on Poppy Seed Dressing and toss.



Summer Tomato Salad

Serves 6

- 6 ounces thinly sliced red onion (1 large)
- 1/2 cup distilled white vinegar
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon vegetable herb seasoning
- 6 medium vine-ripened tomatoes (preferably Creole), thickly sliced
- 6 ounces grated provolone cheese

Place the onion slices in a small mixing bowl.

In a small saucepan, bring the vinegar just to a boil. As soon as it reaches a boil, pour it over the onions. Let sit until cool.

When cool, drain the vinegar into a food processor or blender; set onions aside. With the machine running, add the olive oil in a slow, steady stream until all of the oil has been added and the mixture is pale and creamy. Add the Vegetable Magic and process a few seconds more.

Place the tomato slices on each serving plate. Arrange the onions on top of the tomatoes and sprinkle the cheese over onions. Drizzle 2 tablespoons of the vinaigrette on each just before serving.

Honey Lime Vinaigrette

- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- 2 teaspoons lime zest
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/4 cup vegetable or canola oil
- 3 tablespoons white balsamic vinegar
- 4 teaspoons herb meat seasoning
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons jalapeño peppers, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped shallots

Place all ingredients in a large bowl and whisk until fully blended.



Tuna and Papaya Salad

Mediterranean Vegetable Salad With Asian Vinaigrette

Serves 4

Asian Vinaigrette

- 3/4 cup canola oil
- 1/4 cup rice wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon vegetable herb seasoning
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds, plus extra for garnish
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons minced ginger
- 2 teaspoons chopped cilantro
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon minced orange zest

Vegetable Salad

- 2 ounces fresh baby green beans (or julienned green beans), ends trimmed
- 1 (12-ounce) can solid white tuna in water, drained and flaked
- 1 (4-ounce) jar pimientos strips, drained
- 1 Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored and julienned
- 2 cups celery root, julienned (or use regular celery)
- 1/2 pound small red potatoes, roasted until just tender and cooled
- 1/4 cup chopped red onion
- 6 hard-boiled eggs, cut into 3/4-inch pieces
- 12 teardrop tomatoes, halved (or 4 Roma tomatoes, cut into wedges)
- 1/2 cup chopped cilantro, lightly packed
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh basil, lightly packed
- Julienned fried tortilla pieces, for garnish, optional

In a small bowl, whisk together the vinaigrette ingredients until well blended. Set aside.

In a medium saucepan, bring 2 inches of water to a boil over moderately high heat. Add the green beans and cook until just tender, about 5 minutes. Rinse under cold running water; drain well.

Combine the green beans and remaining ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Add the dressing and toss well.

Divide evenly into four portions and garnish with toasted sesame seeds and fried tortilla chips, if desired.



Mandarin Salmon Spinach Salad With Poppy Seed Dressing

Tuna and Papaya Salad

Makes 4 salads

- 1 (12-ounce) can solid white tuna in water
- 4 cups mixed spring greens or mesclun salad mix
- 1 (7-ounce) jar pimientos, strips, drained
- 1 1/2 cups (about 1 large) ripe papaya (not too soft) seeded and cut in 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 cup (about 4 pieces) Roma tomatoes, cut in 1/2-inch cubes
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves, stems removed
- 3/4 cup (about 2 stalks) celery, cut in 1/2-inch pieces
- 3/4 cup (1 medium) cucumber, peeled and cut in 1/2-inch cubes
- 1/2 cup red onion, cut in 1/4-inch pieces
- 1/4 cup green onions, chopped
- 3/4 cup green bell pepper, cut in 1/4-inch pieces
- Honey Lime Vinaigrette (recipe follows)

Garnish:

- Belgian endive leaves, optional
- Cilantro leaves
- Roasted peanuts, chopped

Drain the tuna and flake with a fork. Arrange the salad greens on four plates. Toss the remaining ingredients with the Vinaigrette. Divide the vegetable mixture evenly between the four salads, mounding it on top of the greens. Garnish with endive leaves, cilantro and peanuts.

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