

Bring In Spring With Greens!

Submitted By Ivy Reid, Craven County Cooperative Extension.

Salads have long been a side dish or compliment to an entree'. Today, salads are a gourmet chef's work of art featuring different shapes, colors, sizes and textures of salad greens. This is a change from the days of the ordinary iceberg and leaf lettuce. Enjoying a crisp fresh salad allows us to experiment with combinations of different types of greens which makes for a delicious, aesthetically pleasing treat packed with nutrients, including calcium, potassium, Vitamin A and Vitamin B-6. Many different greens are available locally for you to try. The next time you have the urge to mix up a salad, experiment with some of these varieties:

Arugula - small, tender and pungent; elongated, smooth, dark green leaves have fairly long stems and grow in small clusters; excellent when combined with sweet or bitter greens, adding a decidedly spicy taste.

Belgian endive - spear-shaped leaves form a small compact head; pale green almost white with slightly ruffled pale yellow edges, texture is crisp and juicy, the flavor pleasantly bitter; a full bodied dressing especially a sweet one, balances this green's slightly bitter taste.

Bibb - a small version of Boston lettuce; loosely furled green leaves are often darker and have crunchier texture; mild dressing compliments their delicate, sweet flavor.

Boston or butter - moderately sized, loosely furled leaves form a tight core; pale green, soft, delicate leaves; best to use light dressing.

Corn salad or mache - dark green, delicate cluster of leaves that grow from a center stem; truly a specialty item; expensive and very perishable; mild, sweet and goes well with vinaigrette

Curly endive - type of chicory; large, lacy (almost prickly), dark green outer leaves and tender, pale green inner leaves; outer leaves are blanched and served warm or cold; inner leaves used in salads; best when paired with other bitter greens and served with robust vinaigrette

Escarole - member of chicory family; large head has dark green outer leaves, loosely packed, and slightly furled; tender pale green inner heart; blanch outer leaves and use inner ones in salad; flavor is bitter with slight sweet edge.

Iceberg - largest selling salad green in the U.S.; crunchy texture; great added to arugula, escarole, or chicory; goes well with full-flavored dressings.

Leaf or red leaf - relatively new; frilly edged leaves, delicate texture and flavor; available in green and red-tipped varieties; best used in mixed green salads with mild or lightly textured dressings.

Oakleaf - large leaves resemble those of an oak and arranged loosely around a central core; also available in red.

Radicchio - relatively new to America; a delicacy developed in Italy; member of chicory family; head size of a grapefruit; beautifully veined leaves are any shade from red to dark maroon; bitter flavor; good combined with other bitter greens; braised, grilled, or wilted and served with a splash of vinegar and oil in Italy.

Romaine - called Cos after the Greek Island where it originated; crisp, oblong leaves that are dark green with thick white ribs down the center; flavor more pronounced; goes well

with bold combinations typical of Caesar salads.

Spinach - available with curly or flat leaves; tender, dark green leaves usually sold in bunches; good raw in salads or stir fried.

Watercress - member of the cabbage family; sprigs have 5 to 6 inch crisp succulent stems and tender green leaves; has peppery flavor which goes well as a garnish or in salads with bitter greens.

A visit to the New Bern Farmer's Market could yield some wonderful finds in the area of salad greens. Beginning in April there should be a wide variety of them for you to create salads or other nutritious dishes. Use your favorite low fat dressing recipes or be adventurous and try a new dressing like the one listed below:

Mustard Chive Vinaigrette

- 1 tablespoon grainy Dijon-style mustard
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh chives
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar
- 1 tablespoon water
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons olive oil

Add freshly ground black pepper to taste. Using a whisk or fork, in a small bowl combine all ingredients except the oil. Slowly add the oil, whisking vigorously, until the vinaigrette is emulsified. Pour over your favorite salad greens and toss. Store remaining vinaigrette in the refrigerator, in a tightly sealed glass jar, for up to one week. To warm cold vinaigrette, place jar in a small bowl of hot tap water for a few minutes. Makes 1/2 cup.

Killer Biscuits Wanted for Attempted Murder

(the actual AP headline)

Lisa Burnett, 23, a resident of San Diego, was visiting her in-laws and while there went to a nearby supermarket to pick up some groceries.

Several people noticed her sitting in her car with the windows rolled up and with her eyes closed, with both hands behind the back of her head.

One customer, who had been at the store for a while, became concerned and walked over to the car. He noticed that Lisa's eyes were now open and she looked very strange. He asked her if she was okay and Lisa replied that she'd been shot in the back of the head and had been holding her brains in for over an hour.

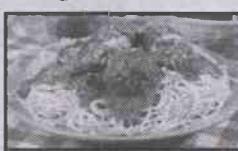
The man called the paramedics who broke into the car because the doors were locked and Lisa refused to remove her hands from her head. When they finally got in, they found that Lisa had a wad of bread dough on the back of her head. A Pillsbury biscuit canister had exploded from the heat, making a loud noise that sounded like a gunshot, and the wad of dough hit her in the back of her head. When she reached back to find out what it was she felt the dough and thought it was her brains.

She initially passed out but quickly recovered and tried to hold her brains in for over an hour until someone noticed and came to her aid. Lisa is blonde.



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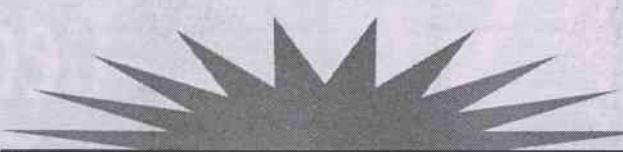
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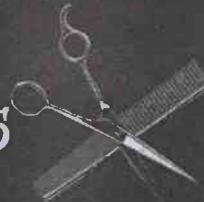


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