

Ideas for Instant Summer Side Salads

It's fun to try new recipes, but you can also whip up a side salad with whatever ingredients you have on hand—like leftovers or your surplus from the garden or a trip to the farmers' market. Here's how:

- Toss any leftover pasta with a favorite herbal dressing. To make a basic vinaigrette, simply whisk together equal parts oil, vinegar (or lemon juice) and spices—like basil, chervil, garlic, marjoram, mustard, oregano, paprika, savory, tarragon, and/or thyme. Add fresh veggies and/or cheese cubes or grated Parmesan, if you like.
- Blend together cream cheese or Neufchatel cheese, plain yogurt, or cottage cheese and a little honey or maple syrup. Sprinkle in dessert-compatible spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, coriander, ginger, poppy seed, and then stir into a bowl of any fresh, chopped fruit. Flavored yogurt works well, too. Just add the spices, sans sweetener, to the yogurt. A touch of vanilla or almond extract, a bit of crystallized ginger, and/or favorite chopped nuts add personality.
- Combine leftover cooked (until just tender) sweet potatoes or baby potatoes, or chopped hard-boiled eggs with a warm vinaigrette or a cool, creamy dressing. As a base for your creamy variety, use buttermilk, plain yogurt, sour cream, or mayonnaise (or a combo of a couple of these). Add a good dose of spices, like dill, garlic, mustard powder, onion powder, parsley, salt and pepper. Or jazz your salad up with the heat of cayenne, chili powder, or Cajun seasoning.



Why Buy Bulk Spices?

Want the freshest spices along with the most flexibility and fun while shopping? Then buying in bulk is for you. Comparison shop for a few spices, and you'll see why bulk is your best choice:

> Price

You'll pay from three to 10 times more for the same amount of spice if you buy it in bottles instead of in bulk! (You—and the environment—have to pay for all those jars and labels, after all.)

> Freshness

As you measure your spices from the bulk jars, relish the aroma, color and texture of each. You know that these spices are fresh because the stock is updated often. They're bright, not faded, richly aromatic, not faint. Your senses can't judge the color or aroma of prepackaged spices, because they're hidden away.

> Versatility

Whether you're stocking up on your favorite cooking staples or just buying a pinch of this or that for a particular recipe, when you buy in bulk, you'll always have the right amount. You don't have to buy an entire package of that exotic spice you'll use only once a year, and you don't have to purchase multiple packages of a basic pickling spice to last through canning season.

> Fun

With bulk spices, you can decide to buy a smidgen of something that strikes your fancy just for fun (chances are there will be plenty of enticing choices). Once home, you'll enjoy replenishing your spice jars, and you'll look forward to cooking with these wonderful, fresh seasonings. Shopping for bulk spices is an all-around satisfying experience!

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17 SUMMER
SIDE SALADS



Summer Side Salads

Recipes for ...

- > Couscous & Chickpeas
- > Avocado Strawberry Salad
- > Tuscan Tomato Salad

... and more!

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Q&A



Colored peppercorns look just great in my clear pepper mill, but what's the difference between them, besides the colors?

Green, white, and black peppercorns all come from the same pepper plant, *Piper nigrum*. But because they're harvested and processed differently, they don't look the same. You can distinguish between their tastes, too.



Green pepper is harvested when the berries are still immature. They have a fresh taste that's less pungent than black pepper.



Black berries are also harvested when the berries are full-size but not yet ripe, but they are dried in the sun, allowing the green berries to shrivel and turn black. These are the strongest-tasting.



White pepper, which has a more subtle taste, is harvested later, when the berries are ripe. They're soaked in water until the outer skins slough off, then they're bleached naturally by sun drying.



Pink peppercorns, on the other hand, come from an entirely different species, *Schinus terebinthifolius*. Technically not a pepper at all, these colorful fruits enhance the flavors of peppers, which is why you'll often find them in peppercorn blends.

Summer Side Salads

Tossing together a great side salad is a skill worth cultivating—especially in the summer months of picnics, potlucks, and “it’s too-hot-to-cook” meals. No matter how simple the menu (a quick sandwich, a cup of soup, or a burger on the grill, for example), a summer side salad rounds out the meal. With the help of spices, you may even find that your salads can be much more than sidekicks!

Couscous & Chickpeas

A perfect grain for summer salads, couscous is light and slightly sweet. Here, it nicely complements stronger tastes—from a good dose of spices, feta, and balsamic vinegar.

- 2/3 cup dried tomato flakes (or 1 cup sundried tomatoes)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons parsley leaf
- 1 teaspoon basil leaf
- 1 teaspoon oregano leaf
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/8 teaspoon coarse grind black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 cups cooked couscous
- 1 cup cooked chickpeas
- 2 green onions, sliced
- 1/3 cup feta cheese, crumbled

Cover tomato flakes or sundried tomatoes with water in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and let sit, covered, 15 minutes. Drain well. Chop if using sundried tomatoes.

Meanwhile, whisk oil, vinegar, and spices together in a small bowl to make dressing.

Combine couscous, chickpeas, onions, feta, tomatoes and dressing. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Serves 6.



Avocado Strawberry Salad

Crunchy and soft, sweet and tart, every bite of this colorful fruit salad is delightfully surprising.

- 1 avocado, peeled and cut into bite-size chunks
- 1 large orange, peeled and cut into bite-size chunks
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced
- 1/3 cup chopped pecans
- 1/3 cup plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/8 teaspoon cardamom seed powder
- 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon powder
- 1/4 teaspoon peppermint leaf



Combine avocado, orange, strawberries and pecans in a serving bowl. In a small, separate bowl, combine remaining ingredients. Pour over salad and mix well. Serves 4.



Tuscan Tomato Salad

Here's an easy, elegant way to serve your bounty of tomatoes.

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 thick slices bread (Italian, French, or sourdough work nicely)
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon basil leaf
- 1/4 teaspoon thyme leaf
- 1/4 teaspoon sage leaf
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic granules
- 1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
- 3 large tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 cup cubed mozzarella cheese
- 1/4 cup sliced black olives
- freshly ground black pepper



Brush 2 tablespoons olive oil on the bread. Sprinkle with the oregano, basil, thyme, sage, and garlic. Place on baking sheet and broil until browned. Cool, then break bread apart into bite-size pieces.

In a small bowl, whisk together remaining oil and vinegar.

In serving bowl, combine tomatoes, mozzarella, olives, and bread. Toss with oil and vinegar. Sprinkle with pepper. Serves 4.

Picnic Peas & Pasta Salad

You can add any garden-fresh veggies (like cukes, peppers, green beans, tomatoes) to this staple summer salad.

- 4 cups cooked pasta (bowties work well)
- 1 cup cooked and cooled green peas
- 1/4 cup shredded carrot
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon thyme leaf
- 1 teaspoon tarragon leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/8 teaspoon mustard powder
- freshly ground pepper to taste

Combine pasta, peas and carrots together in a serving dish. In a small bowl or jar, whisk together remaining ingredients (except pepper). Pour dressing over pasta combo and mix well. Sprinkle with pepper. Serves 6.



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