

Recipes included at this site do not appear in
A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul.

March 2020

INTERESTING WINTER SALADS:

Beet and Blueberry Salad with Walnuts and Feta

**German Overnight Cucumber Salad
with Creamy Mustard Dressing**

Israeli Couscous and Cheese Salad

Kidney Bean and Sweet Onion Salad

Peruvian Corn and Cheese Salad

**Spinach Tortellini and Artichoke Salad
with Tomato Vinaigrette**

Those of you who are vegetarians may well have experienced being offered a salad by a restaurant whose menu offering did not accommodate meatless diners. One of my uncles even suggested that I might want to go out in the backyard and graze. Sights aside, the salad plate can be a useful culinary vehicle for the nutrition of vegetables.

The Romans and the ancient Greeks enjoyed all kinds of greens but the habit appears to have been lost in the Middle Ages, during which time little attention was given to vegetables, especially raw vegetables. In the fourteenth century the word *sallat* first appeared in the English language. The word *sallat*, then salad, derive from the French *salade* which owes its etymology to the Latin *salata* meaning salty. A sloppy soup-like concoction topped with marzipan, of all things, was popular in the fifteenth century in Milan. Fortunately, *zelada*, the Milanese soup/salad, fell out of favor. Going back to the simply dressed greens of the Romans and Greeks is, of course, a summertime pleasure when you can forage but there would be no winter salads in the northern hemisphere or summer salads in the southern hemisphere if that was the rigid definition of a salad.

Dishes that qualify as salads can be first courses or main courses or, classically, side dishes. Even Spanish *gazpacho* can be categorized as a salad, harking back to the soupy concoction previously mentioned. No longer do we have to define a salad as a mixture of raw vegetables with garnishes such as croutons, cheese, nuts, etc. dressed with an acid and oil mixture. The resources that can be tapped are so expansive that we have often thought it might be a fun challenge to prepare a different salad each day for a year or two. Our daughter would have loved that. As a child, she always opted out of the salad dressing but she loved almost any salad mixture. On the other hand, she had a friend who would not eat a dish if it was called a salad, no matter what was in it, no matter how much she liked the ingredients. If it was called a salad and was served on a salad plate or in a salad bowl, she would decline.

We have recently shared interesting slaws [see *recipe archives – July 2018*] and thought that you might be interested in some of the salads we enjoy when our gardens no longer fill our salad bowl.



BEET AND BLUEBERRY SALAD WITH WALNUTS AND *FETA*

TPT - 27 minutes

Once again I am drawn to the early, early food writers who condemned red and purple foods as peasant food. I even found a writer, obviously influenced by the imagination of artists down through history, who believed red foods represented the devil and were not to be part of a “good Christian” meal. We now know that red and purple foods are a boom to our immune systems because they are packed with antioxidants. As red as they may be, it is not the devil in the detail, it is their anti-inflammatory characteristics that should be lauded. This is a great winter salad that is easily assembled on a snowy winter day if you have blueberries in your freezer, walnuts and a can of whole beets in your larder, and feta or even goat cheese in your refrigerator. Omit the cheese if you prefer to go vegan.

8 canned, baby beets—cut into large dice
1 tablespoon *high-heat* safflower or sunflower oil

HONEY – MUSTARD *VINAIGRETTE*:

1 1/2 teaspoons honey or agave nectar
1/2 teaspoon *Dijon* mustard with wine
1 tablespoon *extra virgin* olive oil
1 1/2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1/4 cup large walnut pieces

**2/3 cup blueberries—well-washed and stemmed,
and defrosted if frozen**

1/4 teaspoon crushed, dried mint leaves

1/4 cup crumbled *feta* cheese

Preheat oven to 200 degrees F.

In a skillet set over *MEDIUM* heat, heat safflower or sunflower oil. Add diced beets and sauté until beets shrivel and brown. Remove from heat and allow to cool while making *vinaigrette*.

In a cruet, combine honey, mustard, oil, vinegar, and black pepper. Shake well and set aside until required.

Spread walnut pieces out on a pie plate or baking sheet. Toast in preheated 200-degree F. oven until lightly browned and fragrant. Remove from oven.

In a mixing bowl, combine blueberries, pan-roasted beets, crushed mint leaves, and *toasted* walnut pieces. Toss to mix well. Turn into a serving bowl.

Sprinkle cheese over.

Serve with prepared honey–mustard *vinaigrette*.



Yields 4 servings
adequate for 2 people

Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 4.8 g.; FAT = 16.4 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 11.8 g.;
CALORIES = 198; CALORIES FROM FAT = 75%

GERMAN OVERNIGHT CUCUMBER SALAD WITH CREAMY MUSTARD DRESSING

Gurkensalat mit Senfsauce

TPT - 8 hours and 10 minutes;
8 hours = flavor development period

As long as I can remember German-style cucumber salads have been part of my culinary life—wilted sweet and sour, wilted with sour cream, and variations prepared by the cooks in my family of German descent. This version, with mustard dressing, is different and interesting to the palate . . . and less salty. It is a very good way to use winter cucumbers.

CREAMY MUSTARD DRESSING:

1/4 cup light cream *or* half and half
2 tablespoons light dairy sour cream*
1 1/2 tablespoons Dijon mustard with wine, or to taste**
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Pinch salt
2 tablespoons snipped fresh dillweed

1 long, thin cucumber***—peeled, scored with the tines of a fork and *thinly* sliced

Red onion rings, for garnish

In a mixing bowl, combine cream, sour cream, mustard, black pepper, and salt. Using a wire whisk, combine thoroughly.

Add snipped dillweed. Again, combine thoroughly.

Add cucumber slices. Fold them into the dressing to coat each slice. Cover and refrigerate for 8 hours. Turn into a serving bowl. Garnish with red onion rings.

Serve chilled. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yields 4 servings

Notes: *Thick Gecek yogurt can be substituted, if preferred.

**We prefer to use our own mustard sauce, a recipe for which can be found on pp. 675-686 of volume II of *A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul*.

***I generally use a common English cucumber for this salad but if I have the availability of Kirby pickling cucumbers, I find their firm texture preferable.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.



1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 1.2 g.; FAT = 2.1 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 3.3 g.;
CALORIES = 37; CALORIES FROM FAT = 51%



ISRAELI COUSCOUS AND CHEESE SALAD

TPT - 1 hour and 54 minutes;
 20 minutes = cooling period;
 1 hour = flavor development period

Israeli couscous, mughrabiye, or pearl couscous is really a commercial version of the North African pasta product brought to Israel in the 1950s. It was introduced as an alternative for rice and was preferred by immigrants from North Africa and eastern Arab countries. Although often a challenge to find, mughrabiye is well worth seeking out. It is made from the same toasted semolina as is regular couscous, but the balls of pasta are larger and more useful in recipes because they actually add substance to the dish when stirred into the other ingredients while regular couscous has to be used as a base over which the ingredients are served. Most versions of this salad feature feta cheese but I find fresh mozzarella pearls, the soft, little balls of sweet freshness, to be a perfect accompaniment. Since the Israeli couscous is first browned in oil, a lovely contrast is being created from the first step. The seasoning, added after the Israeli couscous is cooked, adds more contrast. Then, the freshness of parsley is added. By the time you serve this onto an iceberg lettuce leaf, you have lots of both flavor and textural contrast.

2 quarts boiling water

1 tablespoon safflower or sunflower oil
1/2 cup Israeli couscous

1/8 teaspoon ground turmeric
Pinch ground cumin
Pinch ground coriander
Salt, to taste
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
1/2 cup fresh mozzarella pearls
2 tablespoons calorie-reduced or light mayonnaise

4 iceberg lettuce leaves—well-washed and dried*

Set a saucepan over *LOW* heat. Add *boiling* water. Allow to simmer until the browning of the *couscous* has been completed.

In a small skillet set over *LOW* heat, heat oil. Add Israeli *couscous*. Cook, stirring constantly, until lightly browned, *being careful not to allow couscous to burn*. Turn into saucepan with *boiling* water. Increase heat to *MEDIUM-HIGH* and allow *couscous* to boil for 6 minutes. Turn into a sieve and drain well. Turn into a mixing bowl.



Add ground turmeric, cumin, and coriander, salt, and black pepper. Toss to coat. Allow to cool for about 20 minutes.

Add chopped parsley and *mozzarella* pearls. Toss. Gently fold mayonnaise into salad mixture. Turn into a serving bowl. Refrigerate for 1 hour to allow flavors to meld.

Serve onto lettuce-lined salad plates.

Yields 4 individual servings

Notes: *The number of lettuce leaves will, of course, depend on the number of diners. We serve half of this for our main meal salad and then serve the remaining two portions as an evening snack with tea or for lunch the next day.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 5.0 g.; FAT = 9.7 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 14.0 g.;
CALORIES = 156; CALORIES FROM FAT = 56%



KIDNEY BEAN AND SWEET ONION SALAD

TPT - 9 minutes

Nutritionists constantly encourage vegetarians to add more legumes to their diets, touting the important amino acid and iron contribution that legumes can supply. Winter or summer, beans in your larder, dried or canned, can provide convenience and flavor. This salad is very quickly prepared, one of our “go to” legume complementions for a grain-based menu.



1 cup low-sodium kidney beans—well-drained
**1/3 cup chopped sweet onion—Vidalia, Walla Walla,
Mayan, or Texas Sweet**
Pinch ground coriander
Pinch ground cumin
Dash chili powder
2 tablespoons calorie-reduced or light mayonnaise

1/2 cup spicy mesclun – well-rinsed and well-dried

In a mixing bowl, combine well-drained kidney beans and chopped onion. Toss. Sprinkle ground coriander and cumin and chili powder over. Toss. Add mayonnaise. Stir to coat the vegetables.

Divide *mesclun* between two salad plates. Divide the bean–onion mixture between the *mesclun*-lined salad plates.

Serve at once.

Yields 2 individual servings

Notes: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 6.8 g.; FAT = 5.5 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 22.4 g.;
CALORIES = 164; CALORIES FROM FAT = 30 %

PERUVIAN CORN AND CHEESE SALAD

Ensalada de Choclo y Queso Fresco

TPT - 33 minutes;
30 minutes = refrigeration period

When my farmers' market has freshly picked, young corn, that is my choice for this salad. But tender, sweet, summertime-fresh corn is available for only a few months up here in the North so I use the corn I have frozen from the previous harvest season. Green, or raw, corn does give this salad a very special taste, a taste we love but using the frozen kernels gives us another winter salad choice.

1 cup green (fresh) or frozen corn kernels—well-drained
1/2 small orange bell pepper—cored, seeded, and finely chopped*
2 1/2 tablespoons finely chopped Italian red onion
2 ounces fresh mozzarella cheese tiny pearls or cubes of queso fresco
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh coriander (cilantro) leaves

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

In a mixing bowl, combine corn, *finely* chopped pepper and onion, *mozzarella* cheese pearls, and *finely* chopped fresh coriander (*cilantro*). Toss to mix well.

Add olive oil, lime juice, and black pepper. Toss to coat. Turn into a serving bowl. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Serve chilled.

Yields 4 servings
adequate for 2 people

Notes: *Red or yellow bell peppers can be substituted, if preferred.

This recipe may be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 5.8 g.; FAT = 7.0 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 19.2 g.;
CALORIES = 151; CALORIES FROM FAT = 42%



SPINACH *TORTELLINI* AND ARTICHOKE SALAD WITH TOMATO *VINAIGRETTE*

TPT - 51 minutes;
30 minutes = sun-dried tomato soaking period

Although this salad is an excellent salad to include in your winter repertoire, it is a salad to which I turn in the summer or fall for a picnic in the woods or at the dam. I can make it the day before leaving little preparation for our day out.

TOMATO *VINAIGRETTE*:

1/4 cup canned, *diced* tomatoes

1 1/2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon *extra virgin* olive oil
1 teaspoon garlic oil
1/4 teaspoon crushed, dried oregano
Pinch crushed, dried thyme
Salt, to taste
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1 tablespoon *sulfite-free* sun-dried tomatoes
1 cup *boiling* water

2 quarts *boiling* water
1 cup fresh spinach *tortellini* with cheese*
1/2 cup *frozen* artichoke heart quarters

1/3 cup halved grape tomatoes
2 tablespoons *finely slivered* fresh basil
1 large shallot—*thinly* sliced

Using a mini-processor, process the tomatoes into a purée. Turn into a cruet.

Add vinegar, olive and garlic oils, crushed, dried oregano and thyme, salt, and pepper. Shake vigorously and set aside briefly.

Put sun-dried tomatoes into a small bowl. Add the 1 cupful of *boiling* water. Allow to stand 30 minutes until softened. Drain. Chop.

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, cook spinach *tortellini* in the 2 quartfuls *boiling* water according to package directions. Two minutes before *tortellini* are cooked, add artichoke hearts. Continue cooking for 2 minutes. Drain well. Turn into a mixing bowl.

Add chopped sun-dried tomatoes, grape tomato halves, *finely slivered* basil, and *thinly* sliced shallot.

Shake tomato *vinaigrette* vigorously. Pour over salad ingredients. Toss gently. Turn into a serving bowl. Refrigerate until ready to serve.



Yields 4 servings

Notes: *Fresh *tortellini* can be found in the refrigerator cases of deli departments in most groceries today.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 3.7 g.; FAT = 4.4 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 19.3 g.;
CALORIES = 116; CALORIES FROM FAT = 34%

*Pasta, in one form or another, can be found in cuisines far from its point of origin,
wherever that may actually have been.*

*There were so many recipes from which to choose for
next month's column . . .*

Judy

Please note that all food value calculations are approximate and not the result of chemical analysis.

Copyright © 2019