

An Unusual Culinary Column: Scrumptious Summer Salads

By Karen Kain

I am really excited to share this month's column with you. These salad recipes are all delicious, healthy and easy to prepare. Each of these dishes has been made in my home numerous times since I discovered them.

I am not a big fan of fruit in my salad. I usually like to keep sweet and savory separate but this strawberry spinach salad with poppy seed dressing is a winner. I can easily see why people like it, the flavor combinations work very well. I first made the salad with bacon and the next day I wanted to make it again, but I was too lazy to cook bacon so I added summer sausage, which was equally delicious. I made this salad for three days in a row, which is how much I liked it. This is a great party recipe and I encourage you to try it.

My next two shares have been equally big hits in my home. The Sweet and Crunchy Garden Salad is really easy to make and the perfect side to any dish. The sugary nuts make this a bit addicting. It is light, refreshing and perfect for those hot summer days. Another really great salad find is the Delicious Thai Peanut Salad. For me, the dressing makes this salad. I love the flavor combinations. This is a filling salad that you can put most anything in. You can add chicken or shrimp; any of your favorite



vegetables go nicely with this recipe. When I eat this salad I just feel healthy. I know there is brown sugar in the dressing but you can use coconut sugar if you prefer. The cilantro and peanuts really make this salad. If you don't have cucumbers, zucchini would also work. You truly can add any of your favorite ingredients.

I am forever searching to find that next best salad recipe but for now I will enjoy these three. Thanks to all of you who have shared your recipes with me this year! Stay cool my friends.

Amber's Spinach Salad with Poppy Seed Dressing

- Dressing:**
- 2 Tablespoons sesame seeds
 - 1 Tablespoon poppy seeds
 - ½ Cup white sugar
 - ½ Cup olive oil
 - ¼ Cup distilled white vinegar
 - ¼ Teaspoon paprika
 - ¼ Teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
 - 1 Tablespoon minced onion

Salad:

- 6 Cups of fresh baby spinach
- 1 Pint of hulled and sliced strawberries
- 1 Avocado, diced optional
- 3 Pieces of bacon, cooked crispy and crumbled
- Red onion, thinly sliced, optional
- ¼ Cup sliced almonds

Directions:

Whisk together the dressing ingredients thoroughly, put together the salad, toss with the dressing and enjoy.

Sweet and Crunchy Garden Salad

- Ingredients:**
- 1 Cup slivered almonds
 - ½ Head iceberg lettuce, chopped
 - ½ Head romaine lettuce, chopped
 - 3 Tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
 - ½ Cup sugar, separated
 - 1 Cup vegetable oil
 - ¼ Cup red wine vinegar
 - ½ Teaspoon salt
 - Dash of black pepper
 - Dash of cayenne
 - 5 Green onions, sliced
 - 4 Fresh mandarin oranges or 1 22-ounce can

Directions:

Mix the almonds with ¼ cup of the sugar in a medium saucepan. On medium heat cook the mixture, stirring as the sugar melts. Once the almonds have browned, remove and spread onto parchment paper and allow to cool, being careful not to burn yourself. Once the nuts are cooled break apart into bite-sized pieces. In a glass jar combine the oil, vinegar, remaining ¼ cup sugar, and the pars-

ley, salt, pepper and cayenne then shake well. In a salad bowl combine the lettuce, mandarin oranges, green onions, almonds and toss with the salad dressing and serve

Delicious Thai Peanut Salad

- For the Salad:**
- 8 Ounces capellini or thin spaghetti, cooked and cooled
 - 1 Cup carrots, grated
 - 2 Broccoli heads, chopped
 - 1 Red bell pepper, chopped
 - 1 English cucumber, peeled and sliced
 - 6 Scallions, sliced
 - 1 Bunch cilantro, leaves only
 - ¼ Head of red cabbage, sliced
 - ¼ Head of white cabbage, sliced
 - 2 Cups Peanuts

For the Dressing:

- 1/3 Cup olive oil
- 1/3 Cup soy sauce
- ¼ Cup rice wine vinegar
- ¼ Cup brown sugar
- ¼ Cup oyster sauce
- 3 Tablespoons fresh ginger, grated
- 2 Tablespoons sesame oil
- 3 Cloves garlic, minced

Directions:

Cook the pasta as directed on the package, el dente. Add all the salad ingredients into a bowl. When the pasta is cooled separate it with a fork or your fingers and add it to the salad and toss. Add the dressing and thoroughly mix.

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