



Leafy salad: master recipe

Season: Any
Type: Salads
Difficulty: Easy

Serves: 24 tastes in the classroom or 6 serves at home

Fresh from the garden: salad leaves, herbs, garlic

Recipe Source: Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation

This recipe should be one of your basic recipes for frequent use. Vary the ingredients according to the seasons, including leaves and herbs of different shapes and colours, both bitter and sweet. Croutons can be added (such as Turkish bread croutons). Students can decorate the salad with edible flowers from the garden, such as borage flowers, nasturtium flowers, even young flowers of chives.

Equipment:

- large bowl
- scissors
- salad spinner
- 2 clean tea towels
- kitchen paper
- chopping board
- 1 large knife
- mortar and pestle
- juicer
- tablespoon
- metric measuring cups
- whisk
- tongs
- salad bowls or platters
- salad servers

Salad ingredients:

- 4 cups mixed salad leaves (whatever is ready for harvesting from the garden)
- 2 cups mixed small leaves and herbs (e.g. rocket, beetroot leaves, baby spinach, sorrel, mizuna, parsley)
- croutons and edible flowers (optional)

Classic vinaigrette dressing:

- 1 clove garlic
- salt
- 1 lemon OR 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- freshly ground black pepper



What to do:

- Fill a large bowl with cold water and tip all the leaves into the bowl to soak for a few minutes.
- Tear the stems away from any spinach leaves (or if the leaves are very small, just cut off any extra long stems using scissors).
- Lift the leaves onto the draining board of the sink and tip the water into a bucket to use on the garden.
- Rinse the bowl, then add fresh water and return the leaves to the bowl. Swish the leaves again in clean water, then lift out small handfuls at a time and place them in the salad spinner. (Put any yellow or slimy leaves in the compost bucket.)
- Tear any very large leaves into smaller pieces. Working in batches, very gently dry the leaves in the salad spinner. (Reserve any more water that can be used for the garden.)

- Spread out the tea towel and line it with a long piece of kitchen paper. Tip the dried leaves onto the paper and roll up gently into a parcel in the tea towel. Keep the rolled parcel of leaves in the refrigerator until needed. Rinse and dry the bowl.
- To make the classic vinaigrette dressing, set out the chopping board and knife, and place a damp tea towel under the board to prevent it from slipping.
- Carefully press the garlic clove under one flat side of the large knife. The skin will slip off easily.
- Chop the garlic roughly and place it in the mortar with a pinch of salt, then pound it with the pestle until it becomes a paste.
- Juice the lemon and add the juice to the mortar, then stir with the tablespoon to combine, and then scrape it into the large bowl. Stir in the olive oil and add some pepper, then whisk the dressing lightly to combine it.
- Unwrap the parcel of salad leaves and tip them into the bowl with the dressing, then very gently turn them in the dressing with tongs or your hands.
- Serve on platters and scatter with croutons or flower garnishes, if using.

Notes: Volunteers can ensure that students wash and dry the salad leaves very gently, without bruising them.

