

APRIL: SALAD GREENS

Salad greens are widely popular throughout the world, and readily available in supermarkets year round, with hundreds of varieties to choose from. Iceberg lettuce used to dominate the selections, but other **healthier** varieties are more and more popular, and available! Mix them up for a colorful, nutritious meal, or side.

CHECK OUT SOME VARIETIES OF SALAD GREENS DESCRIBED BELOW!



Butterhead (includes Boston and Bibb)

Loose heads, grassy green leaves, butter texture, mild flavor. Good examples are Boston lettuce, which looks like a blooming rose, and Bibb lettuce that has a small cup-shaped appearance. Good in salads, sandwiches, and as a wrap.



Crisphead

The least nutritious of the salad greens, this pale green lettuce takes on the cabbage appearance with its leaves more tightly packed together. An example is the Iceberg lettuce. It's known for the crispy texture and very mild flavor.



Looseleaf

This variety doesn't grow to form lettuce heads, but instead the leaves are joined at the stem. Good examples of this variety include: oak leaf, red leaf, and green leaf. Try it as a salad, on sandwiches, or as a wrap!



Romaine

This lettuce has gained tremendous popularity in the past decade as the key ingredient in Caesar salads. It has a loaf-like shape with darker outer leaves. Try it as a salad, or on sandwiches!



Spinach

Spinach is the **super nutrition powerhouse** of salad greens! Characterized by flat leaves with long stems, it is rich in vitamins A and K, and lots of other nutrients including fiber. Can be eaten alone in salads and on sandwiches, or mixed with other salad greens (and, is one of the only salad greens that can be cooked as well).



Arugula (rocket or roquette)

This variety used to be hard to find, but can now be found at many supermarkets. It is characterized by small, flat leaves with long stems, quite similar looking to dandelion leaves, and a peppery taste. This lettuce is usually paired with other varieties to balance out the taste.



Radicchio

This variety looks like red cabbage, but it's actually a chicory family member. This leaf is typically used for an accent in salads.

Salad Greens Tips

- Add **salad greens** to ALL your sandwiches!!
- Try a different mix of **salad greens**, like European or baby greens, for a tasty twist to your usual salad!
- When grilling, try spritzing (a light spray) some extra virgin olive oil onto **romaine** or **radicchio** leaves and grill until slightly soft – these make an excellent hors d'oeuvre.
- Get creative and include any variety of larger **salad greens** into meals as plate liners you can eat.
- Use larger **salad greens** as wraps instead of flour tortillas, or in place of bread for sandwiches by wrapping up your protein in the leaf (try wrapping up chicken salad, as an easy example)!
- Finally, try to add at least a bit of the nutrition powerhouse of **salad greens** to every salad you eat – **spinach**!

Salad Greens Recipe!

CRISPY VEGETABLE SALAD

Makes 8 servings

Ingredients

- 4 cups broccoli florets in bit-sized pieces
- 2 large carrots, peeled and sliced thin
- 1 large red bell pepper, seeded and sliced thin
- 1 bunch of radishes, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, sliced thin
- 1 bottle (8 ounce) Italian salad dressing
- 2 large bags of colorful **salad mix**

Combine broccoli, carrots, red pepper, radishes, and celery with salad dressing; toss. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 15 minutes. Toss with salad mix before serving.

Salad Greens Recipes!

SWEET AND SOUR LEAFY GREEN SALAD – AN EASY-TO-MAKE NUTRITION-PACKED SALAD!

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

- 5 cups **romaine lettuce** leaves, torn and lightly packed
- 3 cups **spinach** leaves, lightly packed
- 2 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 2 tangerines, peeled and sliced; or one can drained mandarin oranges
- ½ cup raisins
- ½ cup chopped walnuts (toasted if desired)
- ½ cup red onion, chopped or sliced
- ¼ cup balsamic vinaigrette dressing (or more to taste)
- ¼ Tbsp black pepper, coarsely ground

Toss all ingredients in a large bowl, and serve!

AVOCADO CHICKPEA LETTUCE WRAPS

Ingredients

- 1 can reduced sodium chickpeas, drained
- 1 ripe avocado, peeled and seeded
- 2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 2 green onions, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste
- 4 **Boston lettuce** leaves

Toppings: sliced peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers

1. Pour drained chickpeas into a medium bowl. Mash chickpeas until about ½ of the way mashed, with some chunky peas remaining.
2. Add the avocado, and continue mashing until well mixed and to a consistency of your liking (perhaps leaving a few chickpeas chunks to give it the feel of traditional egg salad).
3. Add celery, onions, and lemon juice and stir until mixed. Add salt and pepper to taste.
4. Divide salad mix into 4 servings and spoon each serving into a lettuce leaf. Top with desired toppings and enjoy!

Adapted from: <http://www.glutenfreeveganpantry.com/avocado-chickpea-lettuce-wraps/>