

Get a fresh outlook on your summer menus

It's the time of year when everyone wants to start eating fresh foods again. Gone are the dreams of a cozy pot roast by the fire and in come the visions of grilled meats with crunchy salads and juicy fruits!

I know from personal experience though, that when trying to make a fresh salad for dinner every night of the week, you tend to get in a rut. There are, of course, millions of different salad recipes out there. The problem is that the production of lettuce salads can be tedious and well, boring. I'm going to try and give you a couple of hints to make it easier and a few ideas to liven up your regular weekday salads.

First of all, when choosing the ingredients for your salads you want to select items that will keep well since you do not have the time to shop for fresh ingredients every day! Consider buying some of the baby spinach or mesclun greens available in stores now since they are so quick and easy to use. But try all the lettuces available—there are many, all adding unique colours, textures and flavours to your creation.

As for other ingredients, try adding Parmesan cheese, chunks of blue cheese, feta, chevre, cheddar, or your favourite cheese. Toss in some nuts (be careful of guests with allergies)! Pine nuts, sunflower seeds, slivered almonds or peanuts are tasty additions. Nuts can be added raw, or toasted in the oven first. Add some canned goods like marinated artichoke hearts, baby beets, beans of any kind, peas or niblet corn. Add any vegetable or try chunks of apple, pear or

plum. Sections of red grapefruit or orange are particularly nice in the summer. Sliced strawberries, fresh blueberries, sliced bananas and mandarin oranges make a wonderful combination.

Try preparing your vegetables in a different manner, then add them to the salad. For example roast the niblet corn in a hot skillet, fry some onions, grill some peppers on the barbecue, mince all the fresh vegetables really tiny or leave them in great big chunks and

Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner



marinate them in the vinaigrette for a few hours before adding them to the lettuce part. Chop any fresh herbs you may have and add them in: parsley, chives, oregano or dill are common choices.

Lastly, the choice of dressing will drastically change your salad. A homemade dressing of any kind will taste vastly different from the store-bought varieties. Choose the dressing carefully. Sweet dressings like raspberry vinaigrette, or a honey dressing go nicely

when you have added fruit to the salad. Grilled vegetables, beans or roasted vegetables in the salad call for a savory dressing.

For a quick and easy sweet dressing, mix together 1/2 cup mayonnaise, 1/4 cup milk, 1 tsp lemon juice, 1 tsp honey, 1 tsp lemon zest and fresh ground black pepper. For a simple vinaigrette mix together 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar, 3/4 cup olive oil, 1 tbsp Dijon mustard, 2 minced cloves of fresh garlic, 1/2 cup minced fresh parsley or 1 tbsp dried fresh parsley, salt and pepper.

Have fun and keep cooking!

Lori and Gerry can be reached at whatscookin@independentfreepress.com

Rhubarb, Apple and Berry Crepes with Maple Cream

Crepe Ingredients

- 1 cup flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 3/4 cup milk
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tbsp melted butter

Method

Combine all ingredients in a blender or using a whisk scraping down the sides as necessary to get a smooth batter. Refrigerate at least one hour or up to one day.

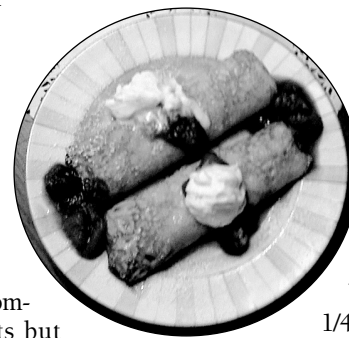
Rhubarb Filling Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh or frozen rhubarb, chopped
- 1 apple, peeled and diced

- juice and zest of one orange
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- pinch nutmeg and cloves
- 1 cup fresh or frozen berries, thawed

Method

In a saucepan, combine all ingredients but berries. Over medium heat, let simmer until liquid has reduced and is the consistency of thick apple sauce. Gently stir in berries.



Maple Cream Ingredients

- 1 cup 35% cream
- 1/4 cup reduced maple syrup

Method

Fold reduced maple syrup into whipped cream.

To Assemble Crepes

In a non stick pan (8") over medium heat melt 1/2 tsp butter. Pour enough batter to coat the bottom of the pan (about 1/4 cup). Cook the crepe, turning once. Scoop 1/4 cup of the filling down the centre of each crepe. Top with 2 tbsp of the maple cream. Roll up and garnish with more cream. Serve warm. Makes 12

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