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THE MINIMALIST

101 Simple Salads for the Season



Francesco Tonelli for The New York Times

FRESH AND FRESHER Clockwise, from top left: tuna, egg, green beans (No. 56); carrots, blueberries, sunflower seeds (7); croutons, tomatoes, mozzarella (42); walnuts, blue cheese, raspberries (49); couscous, oranges, honey (95); strawberries, tomatoes, Parmesan (13).

By **MARK BITTMAN**
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SUMMER may not be the best time to cook, but it's certainly among the best times to eat. Toss watermelon and peaches with some ingredients you have lying around already, and you can produce a salad that's delicious, unusual, fast and perfectly seasonal.

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That's the idea behind the 101 ideas found in this section. In theory, each salad takes 20 minutes or less. Honestly, some may take you a little longer. But most minimize work at the stove and capitalize on the season, when [tomatoes](#), eggplant, herbs, fruit, greens and more are plentiful and excellent.

This last point is important. Not everything needs to be farmers' market quality, but it's not too much to expect ripe fruit, fragrant herbs and juicy greens.

Salt, to taste, is a given in all of these recipes. Pepper, too (if I want you to use a lot of pepper, I say so).

Herein, then, are enough salad ideas to tide you over until the weather cools down.

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Francesco Tonelli for The New York Times
Salmon, watercress, red onion (55).

1. Cube watermelon and combine with tomato chunks, basil and basic vinaigrette. You can substitute peach for the watermelon or the tomato (but not both, O.K.?). You can also add bacon or feta, but there goes the vegan-ness.

2. Mix wedges of [tomatoes](#) and peaches, add slivers of red onion, a few red-pepper flakes and cilantro. Dress with olive oil and lime or lemon juice. Astonishing.

3. A nice cucumber salad: Slice cucumbers thin (if they're fat and old, peel and seed them first), toss with red onions and salt, then let sit

for 20 to 60 minutes. Rinse, dry, dress with cider vinegar mixed with Dijon mustard; no oil necessary.

4. Shave raw asparagus stalks with a vegetable peeler. Discard the tough first pass of the peeler — i.e., the peel — but do use the tips, whole. Dress with lemon vinaigrette and coarse salt. (Chopped hard-boiled eggs optional but good.)

5. Grate or very thinly slice Jerusalem artichokes; mix with pitted and chopped oil-cured olives, olive oil, lemon juice and a sprinkling of coarsely ground cumin. Unusual and wonderful.

6. Sichuan slaw: Toss bean sprouts, shredded carrots and celery, minced fresh chili, soy sauce, sesame oil and a bit of sugar. Top with chopped peanuts and chopped basil, mint and/or cilantro. (The full trio is best.)

7. Grate carrots, toast some sunflower seeds, and toss with blueberries, olive oil, lemon juice and plenty of black pepper. Sweet, sour, crunchy, soft.

8. Chop or slice radishes (or jicama, or the ever-surprising kohlrabi) and combine with chopped or sliced unripe (i.e., still crunchy) mango, lime juice and mint or cilantro.

9. Chop or slice jicama (or radishes or kohlrabi) and mango and mix with coconut milk, lime juice, curry powder and cilantro or mint.

10. Cook whole grape tomatoes in olive oil over high heat until they brown lightly, sprinkling with curry powder. Cool a bit, then toss with chopped arugula, loads of chopped mint and lime juice.

11. Chop and steam baby or grown-up bok choy until crisp-tender, then shock it in ice water. Drain, then toss with halved cherry tomatoes, capers, olive oil and lemon juice.

12. Combine sliced fennel and prune plums; serve with vinaigrette spiked with minced ginger. Nice pairing.

13. A red salad: Combine tomato wedges with halved strawberries, basil leaves, shaved Parmesan and balsamic vinegar.

14. A classic Moroccan thing: Thinly slice carrots, or grate or shred them (the food processor makes quick work of this). Toss with toasted cumin seeds, olive oil, lemon juice and cilantro. Raisins are good in here, too. There is no better use of raw carrots.

15. Cut cherry or grape tomatoes in half; toss with soy sauce, a bit of dark sesame oil and basil or cilantro. I love this — the tomato juice-soy thing is incredible.

16. Slice fennel and crisp apple about the same thickness (your choice). Combine, then dress with mustardy vinaigrette and chopped parsley. Come fall, this will be even better.

17. With thanks to Szechuan Gourmet restaurant: Finely chop celery and mix with a roughly equal amount of pressed or smoked [tofu](#), chopped. Dress with peanut oil warmed with chili flakes and Sichuan peppercorns, then mixed with soy sauce.



18. Roughly chop cooked or canned chickpeas (you can [pulse](#) them, carefully, in a food processor) and toss with olive oil, lemon juice, lots of chopped fresh parsley and mint, and a few chopped tomatoes. Call this chickpea tabbouleh.

19. Mix cooked cannellini or other white beans, chopped cherry or grape tomatoes and arugula or baby spinach. Lightly toast sliced garlic in olive oil with rosemary and red pepper flakes; cool slightly, add lemon zest or juice or both, then pour over beans.

20. Shred Napa cabbage and radishes. The dressing is roasted peanuts, lime juice, peanut or other oil, cilantro and fresh or dried chili, all whizzed in a blender. Deliciousness belies ease.

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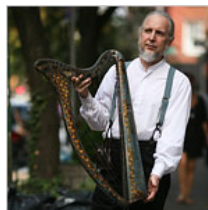
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