

# Melissa's Green Salad

## Ingredients:

- Greens: a combo of romaine, spinach, kale, red cabbage, arugula, shaved Brussels sprouts, or try others like mustard greens or collard greens.
- Beans: this makes any salad hearty. Edamame is a favorite, but I also like cannellini beans in salad, but chickpeas and other beans work well
- Nuts and Seeds: chia, sesame, sunflower hearts, hemp seeds, almonds, walnuts, pecans, etc. I typically use a sprinkle of a couple different seeds, or one nut and one seed
- Veggies: carrot, red bell pepper, red onion, celery, broccoli, and I really like a little avocado, but use whatever you have on hand—cut it up and put it in!
- Fruits: I sometimes like a fresh fruit and a dried fruit. Go easy on dried fruits if you are trying to lose weight. I love to add pear at this time of year, also apple, mandarin oranges, strawberries, whatever you like. For dried fruit, just add a little chopped dates or dried cranberries or cherries.
- Dressing: my go-to is: 3-2-1 (from Jane Esselstyn): balsamic vinegar, some pure maple syrup and grainy mustard, maybe a little tahini or miso if you have it or a splash of orange juice if salad has fruit. Mix it up for one salad, or more and refrigerate. Google online for other oil free dressings you may like, especially Fat Free Vegan. You can make creamy ones with raw cashews, hemp seeds or avocado.

You can make salads ahead, by putting them in a jar with the dressing on the bottom and then laying ingredients until full. These are great to take to work or on the go. Or do what I do and prep a big Tupperware container of the greens. My go-to is romaine, spinach and red cabbage (I usually save kale for a couple all-kale salads I love). Add some sliced red onion, carrot (I always have shredded carrot on hand) and maybe red bell pepper. This makes it SO easy to pull some out for a salad to go with any meal, and ensures you'll get the healthy greens and not just always romaine. Put it into a bowl, add a few nuts and seeds and fruit if you like, and dressing.

If you buy spinach like I do in a big container, use tongs to remove the spinach rather than your hands. Every time you touch the spinach, you introduce bacteria which will degrade the spinach faster. Also use tongs to get the salad mix from your big Tupperware into a bowl. Your lettuce mix will last at least 4 days this way. You honestly eat more salad when you have it prepped this way. Eat big salads! Also, I always put a paper towel folded on top of the spinach before I put the lid on. This catches any condensation, which also makes the spinach go faster. Finally, I turn the bin upside down gently so the spinach is less packed down—also keeps it longer.

Remember to use spinach and kale in savory foods. Add it to smoothies, soups or stews. I also add it to enchiladas and curries.