

MEDITERRANEAN MIXED GREENS SALAD **with RED WINE VINAIGRETTE**

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KITCHEN

Some meals beg for the classics! Serve this crisp, light, palate pleasing salad as the perfect complement to any entree, and especially those that are richly seasoned. All of the components can be prepped ahead making it ideal for entertaining, as well as for taking to work for lunch. See the “notes” following the recipe for further information and ideas.

For a vegan option, eliminate the feta cheese or substitute a good quality vegan cheese of your choice.

Make a stellar vinaigrette by using a good quality red wine vinegar either from the grocery store or from an oil and vinegar shop where you can sample before purchasing. A few brands that receive high marks are:

- Laurent du Clos Red Wine Vinegar
- Pompeian Gourmet Red Wine Vinegar
- Martin Pouret Vinaigre D’Orléans Vin Rouge
- Holland House Red Wine Vinegar
- Lucini Pinot Noir Italian Wine Vinegar

Makes: 3 - 4 servings

Prep Time: 15 - 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

Vinaigrette

1/3 cup good quality red wine vinegar

1 clove garlic, minced

1 teaspoon dried oregano or 1 tablespoon fresh oregano leaves

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Salad

4 - 5 ounces mixed salad greens (baby lettuces, spring mix, or similar)

1/4 - 1/2 cucumber, peeled, seeded, sliced

1/4 red bell pepper, seeded and cut into narrow strips

1/4 cup pitted Kalamata olives, halved

4 - 6 ounces grape or cherry tomatoes, halved

1/4 small red onion, thinly sliced

2 ounces Feta cheese, crumbled

DIRECTIONS

1. In medium bowl, whisk together the vinegar, garlic, oregano, Dijon, salt and pepper. Slowly add the olive oil and whisk until emulsified. (The ingredients may also be mixed in a blender.) Taste the vinaigrette and add additional salt and pepper if necessary.



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2. In a large salad bowl, place all of the salad ingredients EXCEPT the feta cheese. Toss gently to combine. Pour a small amount of the vinaigrette over the salad - just enough to lightly coat - and toss gently to combine. Add additional vinaigrette if needed. Top with the feta cheese. Serve immediately.

NOTES:

- The salad ingredients and vinaigrette may be **prepared ahead of time** up to the point of pouring the vinaigrette over the salad. Cover and chill the salad ingredients, and store the vinaigrette at room temperature. Shake the vinaigrette, then dress the salad just before serving. Store any remaining vinaigrette in a tightly sealed container in the refrigerator.
- For a **serving alternative**, place dressed greens on a large serving platter and layer the bell pepper, olives, cucumber, tomatoes and red onion on top. Drizzle additional vinaigrette over the top and sprinkle with the feta cheese. Serve immediately.
- Change up the salad a bit with any other favorite ingredients such as sliced artichoke hearts, sliced radishes, or shredded carrots.
- The vinaigrette recipe can easily be doubled to have at the ready in the refrigerator - it's much better than bottled dressing and not filled with things we don't necessarily want!