

Leon Salad

My sister-in-law made vast bowlfuls of Leon salad to serve to the Harris crowd last summer. We all enjoyed the lovely flavor combination. This is my version of the famous salad, which was originally and still is served at La Scala in Beverly Hills. The combination of salami, black olives and chickpeas enhanced with fresh basil is amazing. I also love how quick this salad is to throw together. Because most salamis have nitrates in them, I buy Applegate's delicious organic Genoa salami from my local health food store. It's delicious in this salad.

* * * SERVES 4-6 MAIN DISH SALADS, 8-10 SIDE DISH SALADS * * *

1 head of romaine lettuce, or two romaine hearts, washed, dried and thinly sliced (about 8-12 cups worth)
1/4 pound of thinly sliced salami cut into 1/2 inch pieces
1/4 pound thinly sliced provolone, cut into 1/2 inch pieces, optional (you can replace with more salami)
1 to 1 1/2 cup of black olives thinly sliced
8 ounces of cherry tomatoes, halved
1 cup of basil, washed, dried, torn or cut into small pieces
1 1/2 cups of chickpeas, homemade (p. 115) or canned, drained and rinsed if canned
1/2 or 1 red onion, thinly sliced
3/4 cup to 1 cup of Everyday Salad Dressing, p. 118 or Lemon Pepper Dressing with Garlic & Basil, p. 119

1. Place the prepared lettuce in a large bowl. As you chop and slice the rest of the ingredients, add right into the bowl.
2. When ready to serve, toss with desired dressing and serve right away.



Everyday Salad Dressing

I make large batches of this salad dressing and use it for a wide variety of dishes. It's one of our favorites and very multi-purpose. I've used and enjoyed it for years now.

** * * Yield: 1 1/3 cups * * **

- 1/3 cup of raw apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup of extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons prepared mustard (Eden's organic brown mustard or a Dijon style mustard)
- 3 smallish garlic cloves, peeled and finely minced or put through a garlic press
- 1/2 teaspoon each of dried thyme and basil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt

Combine ingredients in a Mason jar with a plastic storing lid and shake vigorously to combine. Or, whisk in a small bowl and place in a container to store.

Variations:

Lightly Sweetened: Add 2 teaspoons to 2 tablespoons of honey (to taste) to tame the tang.

With Anchovies: For added flavor and nutrition blend 3 anchovies with the apple cider vinegar in a blender until smooth. Remove from blender and combine with the rest of the ingredients.

Simple Balsamic Vinaigrette

Balsamic vinegar is both sweet and tangy. The longer it's been aged the more concentrated and sweet it becomes. I find that vinegars aged for 10 plus years can be a little too sweet for me, so I use balsamic vinegar aged for 3-5.

This dressing is another good one to double or triple to keep on hand.

** * * Yield: 1 cup * * **

- 1/4 cup of balsamic vinegar
- 3/4 cup of extra virgin olive oil
- 2-4 teaspoons high quality brown mustard (Eden's organic brown mustard or a Dijon style mustard)
- 1-3 garlic clove, finely minced or put through a garlic press
- 3/4 teaspoon salt

Combine ingredients in a Mason jar with a plastic storing lid and shake vigorously to combine. Or whisk in a small bowl and place in a container to store.

Variations:

With Shallots: Add 1/4 cup of finely chopped shallots.