

Sundried Tomato Spring Mix Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette

8 Servings as side salad or 4 main course salads

For the vinaigrette:

¼ cup balsamic vinegar
½ extra virgin olive oil, cold-pressed (EVOO)
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon honey
2 tablespoons fresh chopped basil
1 teaspoon Italian seasonings

Salt and pepper to taste (takes quite a bit more than you think, start with 1 tsp salt, ½ tsp black pepper, add enough salt until the flavors start to pop)



For the salad:

8 oz Spring mix
1 head of red leaf lettuce, chopped (alternatively, use green leaf lettuce or romaine lettuce)
1 shallot, finely chopped (alternatively, use 1/4 cup diced red onion or green onion)
¾ cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes (do not use the ones in olive oil, they tend to be flavorless)
1/4 cup walnuts, broken into pieces and toasted
1 cup purple grapes, cut in half

Optional: 1 avocado sliced into fine slices plus 2 tablespoons of lemon or lime juice, ¼ cup goat or feta cheese

Directions:

Place the avocado on a cutting board and using a sharp knife, insert the knife into the avocado until you hit the center pit. Keeping your knife on the pit, slide your knife all the way around the avocado by turning the avocado until you have cut it in half. Remove the pit and cut into thin slices. Squeeze lemon juice or lime juice on the avocado slices to keep them from browning.

In the medium bowl, add the Dijon mustard, balsamic vinegar, and honey. Begin whisking until the ingredients are combined. Next, continue to whisk the ingredients while slowly drizzling in the EVOO. You must continue to whisk in order to emulsify the oil with the vinegar; otherwise, it will never come together. Next, add your salt, pepper, finely chopped garlic, thyme and chopped basil. Taste; add salt until the flavors begin to come together, the flavors should start to enhance one another instead of being tasted individually. Also, if it tastes a little bland or oily, add a bit more salt; it will take more salt than you expect but that is ok because it will also help salt your lettuce once combined.

If you would like to use no oil, in a blender, add all ingredients and substitute the extra virgin olive oil for 5 ounces of extra firm tofu. Blend in blender until combined, about 20-30 seconds.

Assembling the salad:

In a large bowl mix together the spring mix and the chopped red lettuce. When ready to serve, add the balsamic vinaigrette (it will need to be whisked one more time if it has separated) and toss with tongs to coat the lettuce, add a little at a time until you have added enough for your taste. Refrigerate any left-over dressing (it will last up to 2 weeks).

Add the rest of the ingredients to the top of the salad: sundried tomatoes, goat cheese, finely chopped shallots, grapes and avocados, if using. Serve immediately. To make ahead, mix vinaigrette and chop all ingredients. Do not add vinaigrette until ready to serve, the vinaigrette tends to wilt and flatten the delicate spring mix.

Equipment Needed:

- 1 Chef's Knife
- 1 whisk
- 1 tong
- 1 medium bowl
- 1 large bowl

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2 cups
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	140
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 11g	14%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 2g	
Monounsaturated Fat 8g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 120mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate 9g	3%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 6g	
Includes 2g Added Sugars	4%
Protein 2g	4%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 37mg	2%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 358mg	8%
<small>*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.</small>	