

Guest Blog Recipe

Tofu Asian Salad + How to Up Your Salad Game

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Salad season is upon us folks. And with this recipe, we thought we'd offer some pointers to strengthen your salad-making skills.

The easiest way to up your salad game is by purchasing a Japanese mandolin. Available online or at kitchen stores (like Fante's or Previn) for around \$25, these simple, professional-grade tools are ideal for slicing or julienning vegetables quickly and uniformly. Cut paper-thin radishes or make vibrant beet batons like a pro. Even a task as rudimentary as slicing onions is made easier and prettier with the use of a mandolin.

Another critical component is, of course, the dressing. This is where you have a chance to really flex your creative muscles. A basic vinaigrette is 3 parts blended oil to 1 part vinegar. For a tangier dressing use a 2:1 ratio. Experiment with different types of vinegars or even orange or lemon juice, as well as different oils. Add sweeteners like sugar, honey or fruit purees. Add herbs, spices, shallots, garlic, ginger, jalapeños. Once you get into it, you'll wonder why you ever used to buy factory-made, preservative-packed dressings from the store.

For this recipe we made a honey and ginger vinaigrette with sesame oil and cilantro for some real Asian flare. Using a mandolin we thinly sliced cabbage and cucumber, and julienned carrots and onions. Top it all off with some perfectly fried tofu, and the visual results speak for themselves. As for the flavors...well, you'll just have to trust us.

Sesame-Ginger Dressing:

Prep time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 cup packed cilantro
- 1 inch fresh ginger
- 2 Tbl sesame oil
- 3 Tbl rice wine vinegar



1 Tbl honey

Directions:

- Using a food processor, add all ingredients, and process until herbs are fully chopped and the oil becomes emulsified.
- Set aside until ready to use.

The Salad:

Prep time: 20 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1/2 head red cabbage
- 1 carrot
- 1/2 a cucumber
- 1/4 of a red onion
- 1/4 halved cashews
- 2 Tbl flax seed
- 1 package tofu

Directions:

- Open tofu, letting the liquid drain into a sink. Then cut the block down width-wise, into four slices, approx. one inch thick. Wrap the slices in a clean dish towel, and set something on top to apply pressure. This will squeeze added liquid out of the tofu, so you can get a really good fry. Some people like to buy a tofu press, but our (super technical) jar of lentils works too.
- While your tofu is draining, begin slicing cabbage and cucumber on the mandolin. Add the medium-sized julienne blade and continue slicing the carrot and onion. Mix in cashews and flax seed, and then set aside.
- In a medium frying pan, add three tablespoons of sesame oil, and turn the heat to high. While the oil heats up, unwrap your tofu, and cut the slices into cubes. Once the oil is hot (you can do a little test by sprinkling a bit of water on top, if it sizzles, you're good to go), add the tofu cubes and continue to fry until all sides are a light golden brown. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to absorb the extra grease, and then stir into your salad.
- Add dressing and serve.

