



Mediterranean Chopped Salad

Inspired by Joyce Goldstein in her Mediterranean Fresh cookbook, my wife and I served this to some friends to great reviews. As it says, you mostly just chop. The vinaigrette, avocados, and walnuts add fat -- but it is mostly good fat. We also used less dressing than the recipe in the cookbook — it makes enough for three salads.

Mediterranean Chopped Salad

Serves four

2 ripe avocados — slice in half lengthwise. The slippery pit stays in one of the halves. Bring your sharp chef's knife down vertically on the pit. It will stick. Rotate on the horizontal plane 90 degrees and the pit jumps out. Wow your guests. Scope out the flesh and chop into 1/2" pieces.

2 stalks celery — 1/2" slices

1/2 cup walnuts — toasted at 350 degrees then coarsely chopped

1/2 big cucumber, peeled, seeded and chopped into 1/2" pieces

1/2 red onion, big dice

Lettuce greens for four

Vinaigrette

1/3 cup fresh lemon juice

2 Tablespoons cumin seed, toasted in a skillet then ground in a grinder or mortar and pestle

2 cloves garlic, finely minced

1 cup extra virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Whisk the vinaigrette ingredients together. Toss the veggies gently with the vinaigrette. Arrange on beds of lettuce on four salad plates.