



Delicious Spinach Salad Recipe for Any Occasion

Introduction

Indulge in a delicious and vibrant Spinach Salad featuring fresh greens, crisp apples, tangy cheese, and sweet candied pecans, all beautifully dressed in a homemade apple cider vinaigrette. This delightful salad is perfect for any occasion, whether as a light meal or a flavorful side dish. The combination of textures and flavors will surely impress your guests and satisfy your cravings.

Detailed Ingredients with Measures

5 ounces fresh spinach
1 Gala or Honeycrisp apple, thinly sliced
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup thinly sliced red onion
1 heaping cup candied pecans
2 ounces crumbled goat cheese or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shaved pecorino cheese
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup dried cranberries
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the Apple Cider Vinaigrette:

3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon honey or maple syrup
1 garlic clove, minced
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Prep Time

15 minutes

Cook Time

0 minutes

Total Time

15 minutes

Yield

Serves 4

Enjoy this refreshing Spinach Salad that brings together the wholesome benefits of fresh spinach with the sweetness of fruit and the richness of cheese. It's an easy recipe to whip up for family gatherings, picnics, or a quiet dinner at home.

Detailed Directions and Instructions

Prepare the Dressing

- In a small jar, combine the apple cider vinegar, honey or maple syrup, minced garlic, and Dijon mustard.
- Secure the lid and shake well to combine.
- Add the extra-virgin olive oil, season with salt and pepper, and shake again until the dressing is emulsified.
- Taste and adjust seasoning as needed.

Assemble the Salad

- In a large bowl, place the fresh spinach, sliced apple, and red onion.
- Drizzle some of the prepared dressing over the salad and toss gently to combine.
- Add the candied pecans, crumbled goat cheese or shaved pecorino, and dried cranberries.
- Gently toss again, adding more dressing if desired.
- Season with additional salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste.

See also Hash Brown Potato Soup

Serve

- Transfer the salad to serving plates or bowls.
- Serve immediately and enjoy!

Notes

Ingredient Substitutions

- You can use any seasonal apples you prefer for the salad.
- If you want a vegan option, substitute goat cheese with avocado or omit cheese altogether.

Storage Tips

- If you have leftover salad, store it in an airtight container in the refrigerator. However, the salad may become soggy if dressed too early, so it's best to add the dressing just before serving.

Variations

- Feel free to add other ingredients such as shredded carrots, sliced almonds, or grilled chicken for a more substantial meal.

Serving Suggestions

- This salad pairs well with grilled meats or can be enjoyed as a light lunch on its own.



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Cook techniques

Making Homemade Vinaigrette

Combine the ingredients in a small jar, secure it, and shake until emulsified. Adjust seasoning to taste for a balanced flavor.

Preparing Fresh Ingredients

Wash and dry fresh spinach, slice the apple thinly, and thinly slice the red onion to maintain texture and flavor in the salad.

Gently Tossing Ingredients

When assembling the salad, toss ingredients gently to avoid bruising the spinach and breaking the cheese or pecans.

Seasoning to Taste

Season the salad with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to enhance the flavors of the fresh ingredients.

FAQ

Can I use a different type of cheese?

Yes, you can substitute goat cheese with feta or blue cheese for different flavor profiles.

How long can I store the salad dressing?

The apple cider vinaigrette can be stored in the refrigerator for up to a week. Shake well before using.

See also [White Chocolate Cake with Pineapple Filling](#)

Can I make this salad vegan?

Yes, you can omit the cheese or use a plant-based cheese alternative and substitute honey with maple syrup.

What other toppings can I add?

You can add grilled chicken, quinoa, or toasted seeds for added protein and texture.

Is it possible to substitute the spinach?

Yes, you can use kale or mixed greens if you prefer a different base for your salad.

Conclusion

This Spinach Salad is a delightful combination of flavors and textures that are both refreshing and satisfying. The balance of sweet apples, tangy cheese, and crunchy pecans makes it a versatile dish perfect for any occasion, whether as a side or a light meal option. Drizzled with a homemade apple cider vinaigrette, it brings a vibrant touch to your table that is sure to impress.

Variations with Different Nuts

Try substituting the candied pecans with toasted walnuts or slivered almonds for a different flavor profile and texture.

Adding Protein

Include grilled chicken or chickpeas to elevate this salad into a hearty main dish while adding an extra layer of nutrition.

Experimenting with Cheese

Use feta cheese or blue cheese instead of goat cheese to add a distinct tang and richness to the salad.

Seasonal Fruit Additions

Incorporate seasonal fruits such as pears, berries, or orange segments for added sweetness and color.

Herb Enhancements

Add fresh herbs such as basil, mint, or parsley to enhance the flavor and freshness of the salad.

Unique Dressings

Explore alternative dressings like balsamic vinaigrette or citrus vinaigrette for a different taste experience.



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