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The perfect salad for winter comfort food

By

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Learn the formula for turning salad into the ultimate winter comfort food!

Salads tend to be associated with summer because of their light and refreshing flavors that can help beat the heat. When winter comes around, we're all looking for something a bit heartier that is comforting, yet still has fresh flavors and beautiful colors.

With winter quickly approaching, you might find your shopping list is full of ingredients for soups and stew, but just because the season has changed doesn't mean that you should relegate a refreshing salad to just spring and summer! A winter salad is a great way to satisfy your cravings for comfort food. It doesn't need to be complicated. Winter provides a bounty of delicious ingredients to choose from like root vegetables, citrus, pomegranates, and squashes. Add in some kale, a flavorful dressing and you've got a delicious winter salad with a beautiful color palette that will make you forget about those chilly days.



[Dalya Rubin's](#) recipe for [Winter Kale Chicken Salad](#) follows a simple formula that yields delicious results time after time. Selecting the right ingredients is key. You will want to aim for this combination: winter greens, delicious vegetables, winter fruit, protein, and a flavorful vinaigrette.

Winter greens

Typically winter greens are leafy vegetables, closely related to cabbage, that are in season during the winter months. Common winter greens are chard, collards, rapini and kale. For this salad, you will be using kale, baby spinach and purple cabbage as your base.

Seasonal vegetables

While seasonal vegetables will vary from place to place due to climate, people typically associate root vegetables and squashes with winter. Eating seasonally is often associated with locally grown vegetables, but did you know that tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers are in season all year long? When you're at the grocery store, there is a simple way to tell if you're buying sustainably grown and healthy veggies: just look for the little logo that says [Greenhouse Grown](#).



Greenhouse grown vegetables are naturally sustainable. They require less land and water to grow more. Plus, they are grown in a protected environment where our growers can control all the aspects of the growing process. From growing plants in sustainable and recycled mediums, to using bumblebees to naturally pollinate the plants, Pure Flavor employs many innovative ways to lessen the impact in the communities they grow in. This efficient way of growing makes it possible for people to enjoy the summer veggies they love all year long!

For this winter salad, Dalya uses Pure Flavor [Organic Sangria® Tomato Medley](#) — with all the colors, tastes and textures of the rainbow. Not only do the flavors of each tomato complement the other ingredients in the salad, but their vibrant colors make this salad pop!

Winter fruit

Fruits associated with winter typically include citrus, some orchard fruits like apples and pears (that, when stored properly, can keep for months), figs and pomegranates — to name a few. These

ingredients can add sweetness and crunch to layer more flavor and texture in the salad.

Protein

Protein is an important component to any meal. Whether you are eating this salad as a side dish, or an entire meal can dictate which protein you want to use and how much. For this salad, the recipe calls for chicken, but if you don't eat meat, you can add tofu, or any plant-based meat replacement. The recipe also calls for some nuts and seeds that provide extra protein and some essential fatty acids.



The flavorful vinaigrette

Dressing the salad should bring together all the flavors and meld them together. Dalya's vinaigrette is a little bit sweet and a little bit tangy with balsamic vinegar, Dijon mustard and maple syrup being the major flavor components.

How to make winter salad

First, season and grill your chicken. This can be done indoors or outdoors. You can also opt to roast the chicken for a more flavorful and tender chicken. Dalya recommends that you use a thermometer

to monitor the chicken so that it cooks to a perfect 160° F inside.

Next, combine the ingredients for the vinaigrette in a bowl or a jar. If you're using a bowl, whisk them until they are well combined. If you're using a jar, make sure that you put the lid on tight and then shake it all up. Dalya recommends the jar method as it will give you an incredibly emulsified, slightly thicker dressing with the best flavor.

Then assemble the salad ingredients on a large serving platter or in a bowl and drizzle the dressing over top. Toss gently to make sure all the ingredients are coated with the delicious dressing. One recommendation that Dalya stresses is to make sure that you massage the kale with your hands. This will make it softer and have a better texture that is more palatable. Add the chicken right before serving.

For Dalya's full Winter Kale Chicken Salad recipe, [click here](#).

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