

INDIAN INSPIRED SALAD

This is not a real Indian salad, but one based on what Robin and Rhonda had at an Indian restaurant in Copenhagen in 1989. It is very refreshing and more-ish and ties in well with curries and other spicy cuisines. It is lovely as a course on its own. Try to find peanut oil that has some character, in particular, one with a peanut flavour! (Try an Asian grocer or possibly a good health food store.) Or try macadamia nut oil.

This makes a large salad – scale it down for your needs. Not all the ingredients are essential – use what is available, there are many variations. For example, we once made a layered version of shredded red radicchio, Chinese cabbage, sorrel and bean shoots, with spring onions, radish, coriander and the spices, etc.

To prepare the final salad, you can toss all the vegetables together. Or you can layer them, or create a decorative pattern. The last step is the garnish as it goes to the table.

Vegetables:

- 2 medium zucchini, raw, finely shredded or diced
- 1 small-medium red/white onion (fine moon shapes, or equivalent in spring onions chopped)
- ¼ red cabbage, tough veins removed, finely shredded
- 1/3 Chinese cabbage, finely shredded
- 4 medium quality tomatoes, skin on, deseeded and diced
- 6-8 radishes finely sliced
- 1 medium carrot shredded or julienned
- 2 cups bean shoots
- (or radicchio, sorrel, witlof, red or yellow capsicum, ...)

Dressing, spices and garnish:

- 1 small clove garlic crushed under a knife and cut in half
- 3 tbsp good peanut oil, or macadamia nut oil
- 1 tbsp lime juice (or lemon)
- salt and pepper to taste
- chilli or cayenne powder
- turmeric powder
- 2 to 3 tsps coriander leaves, chopped coarsely
- 2 or 3 tbsp roasted unsalted peanuts, coarsely chopped, or slivered almonds
- 1 tbsp roasted sesame seeds
- (optional: 1 or 2 hot chillies, deseeded, finely chopped or sliced)
- (optional: small dash of sesame oil)
- (optional: cup or so of crunchy noodles)

Prepare all ingredients as required. When ready to serve, vigorously rub the inside of a salad bowl with the garlic clove broken in two; leave the garlic pieces in the bowl.

If you are tossing all the vegetables together, add the oil, juice and salt and pepper and toss the vegetables through to coat. Taste for seasonings and adjust if necessary, keeping in mind the other ingredients to come. Tip onto a clean large platter and pile up. Or use the same bowl if you wish. Then garnish as described below.

Alternatively, layer the vegetables, or create a pattern, on a large platter. Sprinkle the vegetables with the oil, juice and salt and pepper.

To complete, sprinkle with some chilli and/or cayenne powder and turmeric powder, just for colour and presentation. Sprinkle with the roasted peanuts, sesame seeds and coriander, and other optional garnishes. Serve immediately. Serves four to six as an entrée or more as an accompaniment.