



CHEF DEL'S HEALTHY
Oil-Free Salad
Dressings

BY CHEF DEL SROUFE



HOW DO YOU SALAD?

We ate salads at every meal when I was a boy. It was considered diet food, and we were always on a diet. I don't remember if Mom bought fat-free salad dressing, but I do remember that dad would take us out to a local steakhouse for dinner on occasion, and they had a salad bar. I loved making my own salads and happily piled my plate up with veggies, meats, cheese and an over abundance of blue cheese salad dressing. Dad wasn't as conscious about weight loss and dieting as Mom was so he let me do my thing.

I continued my habit of eating salads in college and even managed to lose 50 pounds my first quarter of school. That weight loss was probably more a result of walking miles across campus each week than it was the Chef's salad I ate for lunch everyday. The salad doesn't get full credit for my weight loss because when I stopped walking several miles each week, I regained the weight I had lost.

I started working at a vegetarian restaurant in 1989, and we made all of our own salad dressings. None of them could be considered healthy by today's standards. They were full of oil and some had eggs in them. In the time I was there, we reformulated the recipes to make most of them vegan, but they still had oil.

It wasn't until I started a meal delivery service in 2001 that I explored oil-free cooking and salad dressings. By 2006 when I started Wellness Forum Foods in Columbus, Ohio, my menus were oil-free.

This collection of oil free salads and salad dressings and sauces is the culmination of my time at Wellness Forum Foods and many of the great tasting foods I made there.

A Note About Tofu

If you prefer not to use soy in any of the recipes that call for it you can replace it with one of two things:

1. **Puréed cooked white beans** - one (12-ounce) package of extra firm silken tofu equals 1½ cups puréed beans.
2. **Puréed cooked cauliflower** - one (12-ounce) package of extra firm silken tofu equals 1½ cups puréed cauliflower (made with 2 cups of cauliflower florets.)



Mayonnaise

There are hundreds of ways to use this recipe. A few of my favorites follow.

Makes 1½ cups

Ingredients

- 1 (12 ounce) package extra firm silken tofu
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in the bowl of a food processor with the fitted blade. Purée until smooth and creamy.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Horseradish Sauce

I love this sauce with Mock Crab Cakes or on a simple baked tofu sandwich with tomato, onion, and lettuce.

Makes 1½ cups

Ingredients

- 1 recipe **Mayonnaise** (see recipe above)
- 2 tablespoons prepared horseradish (horseradish mixed with vinegar), more or less to taste

Directions

1. In a medium bowl, combine the horseradish with the mayonnaise and mix well.
2. Store in an airtight container for days.





Tartar Sauce

Tartar sauce is a classic on fish sandwiches, but it is not just for fish. In the Czech Republic they eat it on their French Fries. I like it on my breaded baked tofu sandwich, and occasionally on a baked potato.

Makes: 1 ¾ cups

Ingredients

- 1½ cups **Mayonnaise** (see recipe)
- 3-4 sweet gherkins or cornichons, minced
- 4 shallots, peeled, and minced
- 1 tablespoon mellow white miso
- 1 tablespoon capers, drained, and chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon dried tarragon
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon champagne vinegar
- sea salt, to taste

Directions

1. Combine the mayonnaise and miso in the bowl of a food processor and purée until smooth and creamy. Add the remaining ingredients to the food processor and pulse until well combined.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Fresh Herb Dressing

I first made this dressing for a friend who had a garden full of herbs she wanted to include in her cooking. Most of the herbs in this recipe grew in her garden and I added tarragon because it is one of my favorite herbs, but one that is often overlooked as a flavor for salad dressings.

Makes 1¾ cups

Ingredients

- 1 recipe **Mayonnaise**(see above)
- ¼ cup fresh spinach leaves
- 1 green onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon minced shallot
- ¼ cup watercress, leaves only
- ¼ cup parsley, leaves only
- 1 tablespoon fresh tarragon
- 2 tablespoons fresh chives
- 1 cup water

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor and purée until smooth and creamy.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Sour “Cream”

Many recipes call for sour cream and even the non-dairy versions are full of ingredients you don't want in your food. This version leaves out the unwanted stuff, comes together quickly, and tastes great.

Makes 1½ cups

Ingredients

- 1 (12 ounce) package extra firm silken tofu
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon sea salt (optional)

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor and purée until smooth and creamy.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Creamy Poppy Seed Dressing

This recipe is great for slaws using cabbage and broccoli, or even grated fruits like apples.

Makes 1 ½ cups

Ingredients

- 1 (12 ounce) package extra firm silken tofu
- ¼ cup maple syrup (or date paste)
- ¼ cup rice wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons poppy seeds
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon sea salt

Directions

1. Place all ingredients in the bowl of a food processor and blend until smooth and creamy.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Orange Dressing

This dressing is a great change from the creamy dressings I usually make . It is perfect in the summer when you want lighter fare.

Makes 1 cup

Ingredients

¼ cup freshly squeezed orange juice

¼ cup maple syrup or date paste

1½ tablespoons soy sauce

1 tablespoon rice vinegar

1 tablespoon arrowroot powder

Zest of 1 orange

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a small saucepan and cook over medium-high heat until thickened. Refrigerate until cooled.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Strawberry Tarragon Salad Dressing

I make this salad dressing every year when strawberries show up at my local farmer's market. It is a great change from the usual vinaigrette and comes together quickly. I often serve it tossed with romaine lettuce, fresh strawberries, and toasted pecans-delicious!

Makes 2 cups

Ingredients

- 2 cups strawberries rinsed, hulled and sliced
- ½ medium shallot minced
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 3 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1½ tablespoons fresh tarragon
- ½ teaspoon salt

Directions

1. Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor.
2. Purée until smooth and creamy, stopping once or twice to scrape down the sides.
3. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days





Sweet and Spicy Mustard Dressing

I used to make a wrap for my deli case called Chef Del's Favorite Wrap. It was made with baked tofu, black bean hummus, mixed greens and this dressing. It was so popular that we bottled it to sell for a while.

Makes 2 cups

Ingredients

- 1 (12-ounce) package extra firm silken tofu
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup prepared mustard
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup maple syrup or date paste
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sea salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cayenne pepper, optional

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor and purée until smooth and creamy.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Raspberry Vinaigrette

After the strawberries are no longer fresh in the farmer's market, I wait with some anticipation for raspberry season. I eat them by the handfuls, but I also love them in this vinaigrette. It is light and refreshing.

Makes 1½ cups

Ingredients

1½ cups fresh raspberries, rinsed and drained

1 small shallot, peeled and minced

¼ cup fresh orange juice

½ tablespoon fresh lemon juice

¼ cup maple syrup or date paste

Pinch sea salt

Black pepper to taste

Directions

1. Add all ingredients to a blender and purée until smooth and creamy.
2. Refrigerate 1-2 hours before serving.
3. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Balsamic Vinaigrette

Balsamic vinegar gives this dressing just a hint of sweetness without adding sugar. Look for brands that are aged without added chemicals.

Yield: 1 cup

Ingredients

- ½ cup unsweetened applesauce
- ½ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup (optional)
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- Sea salt and black pepper to taste

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth and creamy.
2. Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 7 days.





Italian Dressing

Most store-bought fat-free salad dressings are more chemicals than food. This recipe is made with real food and nothing but real food. The key to getting an emulsified dressing in this and other recipes using applesauce instead of oil is puréeing the dressing in a blender.

Makes 1 cup

Ingredients

½ cup unsweetened applesauce
3 tablespoon red wine vinegar
Juice of 2 lemons
Zest of 1 lemon
1 tablespoon fresh oregano
3 garlic cloves, grated
1 tsp ground mustard
Sea salt and black pepper to taste

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth and creamy.
2. Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 7 days.





Roasted Red Pepper Dressing

I love this dressing as a dip for fresh vegetables or on a baked potato.

Makes 2 cups

Ingredients

- 1 roasted red bell pepper, coarsely chopped (see note)
- 1 (12 ounce) package extra firm silken tofu
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup red wine vinegar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon fresh or dried dill

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor and purée until smooth and creamy.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.

Note

*Roast the peppers on a rack over the flame of gas burner or in an oven under the broiler until all sides are charred. Place the roasted peppers in a brown paper bag or bowl covered tightly with plastic wrap and let steam 15 minutes. Peel, remove stem and seeds, then chop. Do not rinse the roasted peppers.





Fresh Tomato-Basil Dressing

This dressing was inspired by an over abundance of tomatoes ripe and ready in the garden.

Makes 1 cup

Ingredients

- 1 medium tomato, coarsely chopped
- 1 bunch fresh basil leaves
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup water
- 2 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor. Blend until creamy.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Thousand Island Dressing

Every now and then I want some kind of Reuben Sandwich. This recipe is the perfect dressing for that sandwich. It is oil-free and has the perfect tang.

Makes about 2 cups

Ingredients

- 1 (12 ounce) package extra firm silken tofu
- ½ teaspoon dry mustard
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup tomato puree
- 1 fresh garlic clove, minced
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ½ teaspoon prepared horseradish
- ½ teaspoon vegan Worcestershire sauce (or soy sauce)
- 4 teaspoons maple syrup or date paste

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in the bowl of a food processor and purée until smooth and creamy.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Creamy Olive And Dill Dressing

Dill grows fresh in my garden in the early spring. I make this dressing with that first dill harvest as an homage to coming season, and to the fact that I love anything with Kalamata olives.

Makes 2 cups

Ingredients

- 1-12 ounce package firm silken tofu
- ½ cup pitted Kalamata olives
- ½ cup red wine vinegar, or lemon juice
- 4 cloves minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- zest of 1 lemon
- 3-4 ounces water, as needed
- Pinch black pepper

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor or blender, except the water.
2. Process until smooth and creamy, adding the water a little at a time to achieve the desired consistency.
3. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Southwest Chili Lime Dressing

I use this salad dressing to make pasta or potato salad, with black beans, corn, roasted red peppers, cilantro, and lime. It is one of my favorite dressings. It is also good as a dip for vegetables, or a topping for baked potatoes.

Makes 1½ cups

Ingredients

- 1 (12 ounce) package extra firm silken tofu
- ½ cup lime juice
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1½ teaspoons sea salt
- 1 tablespoon toasted, ground cumin
- 2 teaspoons ancho chili powder (mild)
- ¼ cup fresh, chopped cilantro

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender and purée until smooth and creamy.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Mango Salad Dressing

Mangos and oranges seem to go together naturally, and they make a great salad dressing.

Makes 1½ cups

Ingredients

- 2 large mangos, peeled, pitted, and diced
- ½ cup orange juice
- ½ cup rice wine vinegar
- ½ cup freshly chopped cilantro
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper (optional)

Directions

1. In a blender or food processor, place the mango, apple juice, and apple cider vinegar and purée until smooth. Add the remaining ingredients and blend for 30 seconds.
2. Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 5 days.





Ginger Miso Dressing

I often make this salad dressing to use in coleslaw when I want a change from the usual fare.

Makes 2½ cups

Ingredients

- 1 cup rice vinegar
- 6 tablespoons white or yellow miso
- 6 large garlic cloves, peeled
- 3 tablespoons maple syrup or date paste
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh ginger
- 1 (12-ounce) package extra firm silken tofu

Directions

1. Combine all Ingredients in a food processor and purée until smooth and creamy.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





Avocado Salad Dressing

I eat this dressing on homemade tacos more often than not. It is also a great dip for fresh vegetables or as a dressing for a baked tofu sandwich.

Makes 2 cups

Ingredients

- 2 large avocados
- 1 (12 ounce) package extra firm silken tofu
- 1 small onion, minced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- Pinch cayenne pepper

Directions

1. Halve, pit, and peel the avocados. Coarsely chop and add them to the bowl of a blender along with the remaining ingredients.
2. Purée until smooth and creamy.
3. Store refrigerated for up to 5 days.





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