



Zesty Zucchini Salad

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 15 / **Cook Time** / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

grate: to reduce food, like a carrot, to very small shreds or pieces of the same size by rubbing it on a tool with an outside surface that has holes with cutting edges (a grater).

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

mince: to chop into teeny tiny pieces.

pulse: to process just short of a purée in smooth, rhythmic bursts of power with a blender.

tear: to pull or rip apart a food, like basil leaves, into pieces instead of cutting with a knife; cutting breaks cell walls more, so herbs can discolor faster.

Equipment

- Medium bowl
- Measuring spoons
- Grater
- Blender (or food processor)
- Whisk

Ingredients

Zesty Zucchini Salad

- 1 small head butter or romaine lettuce
- 2 T fresh parsley
- 2 T fresh basil

- 1/2 zucchini
- 1 T fresh lime juice
- 2 T heavy cream ******(Omit for DAIRY ALLERGY or sub white bean purée used in Cauliflower Mac 'n Cheese, if also making that recipe)******
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 1/4 tsp salt
- ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 T olive oil
- water, as needed to thin out dressing

Food Allergen Substitutions

Zesty Zucchini Salad

Dairy: Omit heavy cream or substitute white bean purée used in Cauliflower Mac 'n Cheese, if also making that recipe.

Instructions

Zesty Zucchini Salad

tear + set aside

Tear up the leaves of **1 head of lettuce** into bite sized pieces and set aside for the salad.

tear + mince or grate

Tear **2 tablespoons parsley** and **2 tablespoons basil leaves** into bite sized pieces, then mince or grate **1/2 zucchini**. Set these aside for the dressing.

measure + combine + pulse

In a medium bowl, measure out **1 tablespoon lime juice**, **2 tablespoons heavy cream**, **1 teaspoon sugar**, **1 1/4 teaspoon salt**, and **black pepper** to taste. Add the minced or grated zucchini and the torn parsley and basil. Pulse in a blender or food processor until smooth, adding some water little by little, as needed, if the dressing is too thick.

add + whisk + adjust

Add **3 tablespoons of olive oil** and whisk together until smooth. Taste the dressing and adjust. Does it taste fresh and well seasoned? Add more salt, pepper, sugar, or lime juice, depending on what it needs!

drizzle + enjoy

Drizzle dressing over the torn lettuce leaves and enjoy!

Featured Ingredient: Zucchini!

Hi! I'm Zucchini!

"I'm very fond of summer, aren't you? After all, I'm a summer squash! I have beautiful, tender green skin, so don't peel it off before cooking, or you'll lose some of my fiber and nutrients. I may be a small gourd, but you wouldn't like my taste as much if I got too big. You can do all sorts of things with me to fit your recipes: slicing, dicing, grating, and even making spaghetti-like noodles out of me using a vegetable peeler or a fancy device called a spiralizer!"

History

Zucchini (*Cucurbita pepo*) is a summer squash of the same family that includes cucumbers and melons. Summer squash is a squash that is picked when immature, while its peel is still tender. Like many other veggies we've seen, zucchini is technically a fruit, not a vegetable! Central and South American people have been eating zucchini for several thousand years. However, the zucchini we know today is an Italian variety of summer squash developed from those of native Central and South America. Christopher Columbus brought squash seeds to the Mediterranean region and Africa. The Native American word for zucchini is "skutasquash," which means "green thing eaten raw."

Anatomy & Etymology

Zucchini grow on vines just like cucumbers do. Zucchini plants produce male and female flowers on the same plant, with the female flowers directly attached to the fruit and the male flowers attached to a long stem on the plant. Therefore, insects must pollinate the plants for the fruit to grow. Zucchini can rapidly grow to several feet long, but the smaller ones taste sweeter. The record for the longest zucchini is 8 feet 3.3 inches. The heaviest zucchini was 64 pounds 8 ounces! It's "zucchini" in the US, Canada, and a few other countries. The word is a plural of the Italian "zucchini" (masculine form—the feminine form, "zucchina" is preferred), which is a diminutive (smaller version) of "zucca" or "gourd." In France, they say "courgette" (koo-RETT), which the British also use. It's a diminutive of the French "courage," which also means "gourd."

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Harvesting zucchini when they're between 6 to 8 inches long and 3 to 4 inches in diameter ensures they will be more tender and sweet.

A "bumper crop" of zucchini is an overload of zucchini that grows faster than a home gardener can cook and eat it!

When buying zucchini, choose firm and heavy ones for their size. In addition, fresh zucchini should have bright, glossy skin free of bruises or nicks. Zucchini stay fresh for up to a week when stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

Zucchini is very versatile, and you can use them in both savory and sweet dishes, like ratatouille and zucchini bread.

Fresh zucchini blossoms can be cooked and eaten raw. You can remove the pistils from the female flower blossoms and the stamens from male flower blossoms, but you don't have to. Both have flavor and are edible.

Nutrition

Potassium: helps reduce blood pressure and increase blood flow to and from our hearts.

Manganese: helps wounds heal and bones grow.

Antioxidants: help keep us healthy and healing faster when we're sick.

Fiber: helps us digest our food and absorb nutrients from our food.