



LS PICK

I am an unapologetic carnivore. Greens are not for me. Bring me red meat, and I'm a happy man. Well, that was me, up until now. Up until now, I did not care two dimes about my health and shoved any concern to the arrogant I-am-young-my-body-can-absorb-anything department.

Quick Salads

I liked that department. It provided me with a lot of joy and comfort.

I recently got fired from that department, though. My friends remind me when ordering food nowadays that I am not 19 anymore. And the doc flagged the red flag on cholesterol. I don't know which is worse...

What I do know is that I have to eat healthy — well, that and the regret of not realising that earlier.

But better late than never, right?

Eating fruits and vegetables does not have to be unappetising as many of us think it to be. There is neither a need to force-feed yourself, nor any reason to dubiously sneak in veggies into the 'otherwise delicious' sandwich for your child's packed lunch.

Salads are my answer! There are endless varieties. It can be as complicated or as simple as you want it to be, and it can be of any combination. With so many options of dressings and the things you can add, it is nearly impossible for anyone not to like salads.

To illustrate, I was really impressed by the salad bar at Chef's Table in Dhanmondi that I tried last week. You take a large bowl, fill it up with myriad ingredients — a plethora of beans, greens, boiled eggs, olives and what not — have it weighed, pay, and then enjoy a filling and absolutely delicious meal.

You will probably not go the food court every day. But that should not stop you from enjoying some delicious salads every day.

Making salads is not difficult. And the trick lies in the preliminary preparation. Once you have done that, the rest is a matter of a few minutes! After all, if you always have it half-prepared, the only thing that remains when you have a craving is to reach out to the fridge and cabinet and do a little adding and mixing. Instant gratification!

These are the things you would always have handy:

- Black pepper (half-crushed)
- Crushed Szechuan peppercorn

- Cans of beans and chickpeas
 - Olive oil, a healthy salad dressing indeed
 - Pink salt
 - Tangy yoghurt, another delightful dressing!
 - Onions, dipped in vinegar in order to get rid of the smell
 - Finely cut or chopped chillies; chunks of ginger and garlic — all dipped in vinegar for that distinct taste
 - Kashundi or mustard paste for that particular kick
- Of course, you can add more to the list.

If boiled stuff is too mainstream for you, go for a charred salad — with garlic, onions, tomatoes, leek, and apples, all chopped and mixed with balsamic vinegar and salt, and charred with olive oil.

Of course, ideas are endless. When it comes to salads, the list of ingredients is indeed very long. From chicken strips to various fruits, and from potatoes to cheese, choices are diverse and myriad.

Salad is a very



And once you have got the basic things ready and prepared, just follow your heart and play along your imagination.

For example, one salad that is totally out of this world is of spinach and hog plum. For that, you first need to parboil baby spinach leaves, and then boil hog plum to extract its pulp. Afterwards, mix the spinach with the pulp and olive oil, adding in chillies and onions. The tangy flavour of the spinach leaves is really appetising!

versatile food.

Just don't overdo it, though, and ruin the very concept of it being a healthy meal!

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