

Adrian's Salad

Notes:

This is a salad which I invented for a "bring and share" supper at Christmas 2006. The intention was to achieve contrasting colours, textures, and flavours. Since then it has been in demand continually among my friends, and I felt it might be of interest to a wider public.

Ingredients (for a reasonable size salad bowl):

250gm Mixed salad leaves: I suggest lettuce, frisée, and red endive. If you can find a good packaged *Salade Mêlée* in the supermarket this can be used successfully.

Half a Cantaloupe melon - not too ripe

120gm Dried apricots

Several medium sized tomatoes

Method:

Wash the salad leaves, unless pre-packed and clean, and spin or shake them as dry as possible. Cut large pieces into forkable sizes and remove any unreasonably coarse pieces. Remove the seeds from the melon, cut the half into about four segments to enable the skin to be removed easily, and cut the flesh into approximately ½" cubes. Centimetre cubes are a trifle too small, so if you wish to remain metric, 13mm cubes. It is possible to use an Ogen melon, but choose an under-ripe one, or the salad will end up swimming in melon juice. This is largely why I prefer to use a Cantaloupe melon: it isn't quite as juicy. Snip the apricots into small pieces - this is when you will appreciate the driest possible dried apricots - and add them to the salad. I find that it is best mixed using a pair of salad servers, aiming to avoid any of the ingredients separating out; shaking usually fails to achieve the right result. When you are satisfied with the look of the mixture, top it off with some "water lily" tomatoes. These are made by stabbing tomatoes right round the "equator" in a zig-zag pattern using a sharp knife, making sure that the cuts all join up and the knife goes right to the centre. If the two halves don't separate easily, stab a little more: if you just pull them apart, part of one half will remain with the other, and the appearance will be spoiled. Large tomatoes are best avoided, because people will be reluctant to take them, for fear of appearing greedy. There is normally no need to add any form of dressing.