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Salad Days

By Susie Iventosch

Have you ever tasted something that is so delicious you wish you could eat it every, single day? Well, I discovered this fabulous salad one day at the La Brea Bakery Cafe at the Reno airport. It was made with some of my favorite ingredients: Napa cabbage, radicchio, Kalamata olives and roasted chicken all tossed with lemon vinaigrette. I just love the bitter greens and combined with those amazing olives, well, let's just say it was out of this world ... and healthy too!

On the return trip, I inquired as to where La Brea had other cafes out in the real world, and sadly, they are only inside security at the airport, Disneyland or in Los Angeles, where the company is headquartered. You can find their bakery products such as baguettes and other breads in local grocery stores, but so far I have not found this wonderful salad anywhere else, except LAX (yet another airport) and once again, past the security gauntlet. You cannot even stop by to pick it up while out running errands unless you happen to have a boarding pass to somewhere, anywhere.

So, I decided to make it myself, including the lemon vinaigrette, and it turned out quite well. La Brea uses Guittard's Lemon Vinaigrette, which I also tried to find on the grocery shelves, but came up empty. I suppose it comes only in the institutional size, because I scoured the bottled dressing section in several grocery stores and found many flavors, but not lemon vinaigrette!

Napa-Radicchio Chicken Salad with Kalamata Olives and Lemon Vinaigrette

(Serves 4 for a main lunch salad)



Photo Susie Iventosch

Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 1 head Napa cabbage, finely sliced
- 1 head radicchio, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, seasoned with salt and pepper, roasted, cooled, then cut into long strips, or shredded (you can use leftover chicken for this, too)
- 1/2 cup pitted Kalamata olives, cut in half
- 1 recipe lemon vinaigrette (recipe below)

DIRECTIONS

Place all ingredients in a large salad bowl and toss with lemon vinaigrette. Serve at once with your favorite bread.

Dressing

INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest (optional)
- 1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice

Sea salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

DIRECTIONS

Combine mustard, lemon zest, salt, pepper and juice in a jar or glass measuring cup and shake or whisk. Add the oil, then cover and shake well until oil is incorporated and the mixture is slightly thickened

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