

Dr Nick's Mediterranean Vegetable Salad *Serves 8 – 10 and can keep for 3 days in fridge*

Ingredients

Vegetables - different colours have different nutrients & vitamins

2 or 3 carrots cut lengthways, then cut into 2 cm pieces

3 capsicums (red, green, yellow) seeded and cut into 2cm to 3cm pieces

½ head of cauliflower, cut into small florets

½ large eggplant, or two Chinese or Japanese eggplants, 3cm pieces

1 zucchini, halved lengthways then cut into 2cm sections

15-20 brussel sprouts, cut halfway through, then halved

2 parsnips, cut similar to carrots

1 head of broccoli, cut into small florets

2 medium onions, sliced thickly (Prebiotic)

2 whole bulbs of garlic, skin the cloves and add to vegetables as they are roasted (Prebiotic)

1 bunch of asparagus, cut into 3cm pieces and added to vegetables as they are roasted (Prebiotic)

250 grams or cup of Swiss brown mushrooms, quartered

Sun dried tomatoes from a jar



Seeds & Nuts - good sources of protein, healthy fats, fibres, vitamins and minerals

½ cup of seeds. Can include hemp, chia, sesame, sunflower. Note, pepita seeds go hard in this salad.

2/3 cup of mixed nuts. Can include pistachios, walnuts, pine nuts (my favourite) and/or almonds

Prebiotics – allows your gut bacteria to produce nutrients

Pickled artichokes, about 100 grams

Probiotics – improves digestive health

Olives pickled in brine, added when the vegetables are cooked

Legumes, Chick peas are great

200 grams of fetta cheese, broken into small pieces approximately 2cm cubed

Dressing

1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar (probiotic)

½ large lemon. Add zest and the juice (powerful antioxidant that can help promote healthy digestion by stimulating the production of stomach acid)

Salt and pepper to taste

Olive oil for cooking

Method

Preheat oven to 180c

Good splash of olive oil to 2 baking trays

Prepare carrots first and add to a baking tray. Place in the oven. While the carrots are roasting prepare the capsicum. After about 15 minutes, add the capsicum to the carrots and roast until slightly golden brown. Remove from the oven and tip into a large bowl.

While the first tray is roasting, prepare the cauliflower, brussel sprouts, parsnips and add them to the second tray with a drizzle of olive oil and sprinkle Italian Herbs liberally over the vegetables. Add to the oven and cook until soft and slightly brown or a little charred. Take out and let cool.

While the second tray is roasting, prepare the eggplant, broccoli, zucchini, asparagus, quartered mushrooms and garlic cloves, add a drizzle of olive oil and Italian Herbs and roast until soft. Doing it in this procession saves a fair amount of time, as you can prepare while roasting. Leave the last two trays of vegies to cool while you prepare the additions to the salad.

Once the vegetables have cooled, add the sun dried tomatoes and include a little of the oil that it is in. Add the olives, chick peas, artichokes, fetta, seeds and nuts. Zest the lemon and add it and the juice to the vegetables. Add the apple cider vinegar, and season with salt and pepper.

With a large wooden spoon, combine the ingredients carefully, making sure you don't pulverise the cheese and the soft vegetables, such as zucchini and egg plant.

Cover the bowl in cling wrap and refrigerate until needed. If you take this to a party, don't expect to have any to take home. People quickly doggy-bag any leftovers of this! I even find my grandies love it!

Note: If you are on a FODMAP diet, simply leave out the vegetables that should be excluded from that diet. This would include artichokes, asparagus, onions and garlic, broccoli and chick peas.

Have a bit of fun on Google by asking Google what vitamins and minerals are in each of the vegetables listed. Make a list and see just how healthy all this food is.

Add whatever proteins you want with this dish and mix it up over two or three days. Remember, just a handful of protein is all you need. But that's your choice. I generally make this once or twice a week to keep my gut health awesome. This assists with good mental health and good sleep health. Whenever I am on the road for a few days or more, this is the first dish I like to make when I get home. After eating hotel and motel food, or even restaurant food, I crave the vegetables that are generally lacking in these meals.

Remember to: *“Eat well, move often and sleep like a champion, and you have the chance to be the best version of yourself!”*

Enjoy! Dr Nick