

Below are two recipes of delicious vinaigrettes you can add to your favorite salads!

Balsamic Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

- 1 sprig fresh oregano
- 1 sprig fresh thyme
- 1 c. olive oil
- ¼ c. balsamic vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

In a medium glass mixing bowl, combine the oregano, thyme, oil, vinegar, salt and pepper. Mix together and pour mixture into a bottle, using a funnel to keep from spilling. Cover tightly and store at room temperature.

Note: if you do not want to add herbs, mixing just the vinegar and oil tastes good too!

Greek Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

- 1 c. olive oil
- 1 c. red wine vinegar
- 2 ½ tsp. garlic powder
- 2 ½ tsp. dried oregano
- 2 ½ tsp. dried basil
- 2 tsp. pepper
- 2 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. onion powder
- 2 tsp. Dijon-style mustard

Directions:

Mix together and shake well. Store at room temperature tightly covered.

Salad dressings are no longer just the basic Italian, Ranch and Dorothy Lynch anymore. Supermarket shelves are now lined with interesting flavors such as mango habanero, pear gorgonzola and sriracha lime. There are many flavor combinations using fruit-flavored or wine vinegars, tangy citrus juices and fresh herbs. Salad dressings can add a lot of flavor to your food, but it sometimes comes with a price. Many varieties can pack in over 20 grams of fat for just 2 tablespoons. And many salad lovers pour on much more than that on their salads. Full fat salad dressings typically contain about 10-20 grams of fat and 100-180 calories per two-tablespoon serving. Therefore, if someone on a 1,500 calorie diet, who should only have about 50 grams of fat daily, would consume 40% of their fat intake for the whole day with just two tablespoons of salad dressing. Moderation is key when using salad dressings. To help keep portions of salad dressing small, try putting your salad dressing in a small bowl and dipping your salad into it.

Some salad dressings can be a good source of heart-healthy unsaturated oil. Generally oil and vinegar dressing such as vinaigrette or Italian have less fat and saturated (unhealthy) fat per serving than creamy varieties or those containing cheese. Of course there are also low-fat and fat-free versions of salad dressings with less fat per servings. However, fat free does not necessarily mean calorie free. When fat is taken out of the product, often times more sugar will be added to make up for the loss of flavor. Salad dressings can also contain high amounts of sodium, some having over 500 mg per serving. Generally though, vinaigrettes can be a lower sodium choice. If possible, choose salad dressings that have less than 150 mg sodium per serving and use vinegar and herbs for zest rather than added sodium. Whether your nutrition goals include monitoring sodium, fat, carbohydrates, or all three, you can find the best salad dressing that fits your needs by checking the Nutrition Facts panels with the nutrient content and ingredients.