Salad of the Imagination

Fresh from the garden: chives, garlic, zucchini
Recipe Source: Stephanie Alexander's Kitchen Garden Cooking with Kids (Penguin Lantern 2006)

Students love making 'Salad of the imagination' and there are so many possible combinations. Many of the extra ingredients listed here are heavier than the salad leaves, which means the extras will tend to sink to the bottom of the bowl. For that reason, it is often better to serve these kinds of salads on a wide shallow platter, then everyone can see the special touches. Always add the dressing and toss the salad well, just before serving.

Suggestions by season:
- Spring: herbs (such as flowering thyme), pine nuts, rocket leaves (arugula)
- Summer: tomatoes, mozzarella, basil, spinach, rocket leaves (arugula)
- Autumn: celeriac, gruyere, parsnip chips
- Winter: spinach, croutons, bacon, beetroot

Equipment:
- large bowl
- scissors
- salad spinner
- clean tea towels
- kitchen paper
- measuring cups and spoons
- small bowl
- whisk
- juicer (optional)
- chopping board
- 1 large knife
- tongs
- salad bowls or platters
- salad servers

Ingredients:
- 4 cups mixed salad leaves from the garden
- 2 cups mixed small leaves and herbs
- garnishes and other ingredients such as:
  - croutons (plain or garlic-rubbed)
  - toasted nuts (pine nuts, walnuts, almonds)
  - toasted seeds (pumpkin, sunflower, linseed)
  - shavings or crumblings of cheese (parmesan, pecorino, presset ricotta salata, blue cheese, feta, gruyère)
  - chunks of avocado
  - cured fish (anchovies, smoked trout)
  - gratings of vegetables (beetroot, carrot, radish, celeriac)
  - hard-boiled eggs (sliced or chopped)
  - bacon (cooked until crisp, and crumbled)
  - raw fruits (apples, pears, citrus fruits)
  - pickled or preserved products (preserved lemons, pickled plums or cherries)
What to do:
- Assemble your ingredients, thinking about what is in season, which flavours go together and how they will feel in a salad (for example, it’s always nice to have something crunchy along with the soft green leaves).

**To prepare the salad leaves and herbs:**
- Fill a large bowl with cold water and tip all the salad leaves and large herbs into the bowl to soak for a few minutes.
- Lift the leaves onto the draining board of the sink. Tip the water into a bucket to be used on the garden.
- Rinse the bowl, then add fresh water and return the leaves to the bowl. Swish the leaves again in clean water, then lift out small handfuls at a time and place them in the salad spinner.
- Put any yellow or slimy leaves in the compost bucket. Pluck any herbs from tough stems and discard the stems.
- Tear any very large leaves into smaller pieces. Working in batches, very gently dry the leaves in the salad spinner. (Reserve any more water that can be used for the garden.)
- Spread out a dry tea towel, and line it with a long piece of kitchen paper. Tip the dried leaves onto the paper and roll up gently into a parcel in the tea towel.
- Keep the rolled parcel of leaves in the refrigerator until needed. Rinse and dry the bowl.

**To make the dressing:**
- To make a dressing, the most common formula is 1 part acid (such as lemon juice or vinegar) to 4 parts oil. (High-quality vinegars are very powerful, so you may need to use less.)
- Combine your acid with your oil in a small bowl. Whisk lightly to combine.
- Whisk in additions, which could include mustard, small amounts of honey or sugar, freshly chopped herbs (such as parsley, tarragon, chervil or mint), toasted spices (such as coriander seeds or cumin seeds), yoghurt.
- Whichever combination you choose, always season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.
- Taste the dressing and adjust the flavours as necessary before using.

**To assemble the salad:**
- Prepare any other ingredients for your salad, such as croutons or toasted seeds, cheeses, preserves, grated vegetables or hard-boiled eggs.
- Unwrap the parcel of salad leaves and tip them into the bowl with the dressing, then very gently turn them in the dressing with tongs or your hands.
- Serve on platters and scatter with croutons or edible flower garnishes, if using.
Basic Bread – Rolls

Season: All
Makes: 2 loaves or 30 rolls

Equipment:
- measuring scales, spoons and large jug
- 2 large mixing bowls
- wooden spoon
- pastry brush
- tea towel
- spoon
- oven mitts
- baking tray and baking paper

Ingredients:
- 600 ml warm water
- 2 tbsp honey (can substitute with molasses)
- 800 g plain flour
- 200 g whole-wheat flour
- 2 tsp salt
- 14 g instant dry yeast
- vegetable oil, for oiling bowl and tin

What to do:
1. Combine the water and honey, and stir to dissolve the honey.
2. Tip the flour into a large mixing bowl and add the salt and yeast. Stir once or twice with the wooden spoon. Make a well in the centre.
3. Pour the water and honey mixture into the well.
4. Stir to mix the flour and water to a heavy dough.
5. Sprinkle a little flour over the bench, your hands and the dough.
6. Tip out the dough and use your hands to squash it all together into one lump.
7. Knead the dough for 5 minutes, sprinkling it with flour if it feels sticky. Cover it with a tea towel and leave it for at least 30 minutes in a warm spot (not too hot), to double in size.
8. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
9. Punch the dough down once to release the air, then knead for 30 seconds.
10. Divide dough into 30 pieces (or two loaves). Shape each piece into a ball or knot and place it on a lined baking tray. Leave the shaped dough in a warm place again for 20 minutes. You should see that it has risen.
11. Put the tray in the oven and bake for 20–25 minutes.
12. "Wearing oven mitts on both hands, carefully take the tray out of the oven."
13. Wait at least 10 minutes before slicing and serving warm.

*Adult supervision required
Vegetable Frittata

Set oven temperature at 180°C

- **Ingredients:**
  - 6 eggs, lightly whisked
  - ½ cup pure cream
  - 2 garlic cloves, crushed
  - 1 onion finely diced
  - 2 cups vegetables (choosing from grated zucchini, pumpkin and diced red capsicum, peas etc)
  - ½ cup grated parmesan cheese plus extra for sprinkling on top
  - Salt & freshly ground black pepper
  - 2 teaspoons olive oil

- **Method:**

1. **Step 1**
   Whisk the eggs, cream and garlic together in a large bowl. Gently fold in the vegetables and the cheese, and season with salt and pepper.

2. **Step 2**
   Heat the oil in a large non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Pour in the vegetable mixture and cook for 5-6 minutes or until frittata is set, sprinkle with the extra grated parmesan.

3. **Step 3**
   Place the pan into the oven and cook until slightly brown on top and set.

4. **Step 4**
   Cut the frittata into small wedges and place on serving plates. Serve immediately.
Pumpkin and Turnip Soup

Ingredients:

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cups diced pumpkin
- 2 cups diced turnip
- 1 cup thinly sliced celery
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 ¾ cups chicken stock (1200 ml)
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon honey
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- salt to taste

Method:

1. Heat the butter and olive oil in a large pot over medium heat.
2. Stir in the diced pumpkin, turnips, celery, onion and garlic and cook until vegetables just begin to brown.
3. Make chicken stock according to directions on the container using boiling water and add to the vegetables, simmer.
4. Add the bay leaf, honey, pepper, nutmeg, coriander, cayenne pepper and salt.
5. Continue simmering until all vegetables are soft.
6. Remove bay leaf and serve or blend.
7. Using a blender stick blend until smooth (optional)
8. If too thick add a little more stock or water.