

MASSAGED KALE SALAD

Prep Time: 10 minutes | Total Time: 10 minutes | Yield: 6 Portions

Description

Massaged kale salad transforms sturdy raw kale into a tender, flavorful green by gently working the leaves with vinaigrette. The acidity and oil soften the cell structure of the kale while preserving its vibrant color and nutrients. Combined with sweet dried fruit, toasted nuts, and creamy cheese, this salad balances bitterness, acidity, sweetness, and richness—making it an excellent accompaniment to roasted vegetables, grilled meats, or farm-fresh meals.

Ingredients

Vinaigrette

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Salad

- 1 bunch curly kale, stems removed and leaves chopped
- ¼ red onion, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup dried cranberries
- ¼ cup toasted pecans, chopped
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese

Directions

1. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together olive oil, apple cider vinegar, maple syrup, Dijon mustard, salt, and black pepper.
2. Add chopped kale to the bowl and gently massage with the vinaigrette for 2–3 minutes until leaves soften and darken in color.
3. Add sliced red onion, dried cranberries, and toasted pecans. Toss gently until evenly combined.
4. Sprinkle feta cheese over the salad and serve immediately.



Chef Ron's Notes

- Massaging kale breaks down the fibrous structure making it more tender.
- If preparing ahead, massage kale first and add toppings just before serving.
- Great additions include roasted squash, shaved carrots, candied walnuts or toasted pumpkin seeds.
- A perfect classroom recipe demonstrating texture transformation.

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