

# Simple, satisfying salads

These make-ahead dishes are ideal for any celebration.

By Michael Chiarello

**B**ecause I cook and entertain so often, I insist on a party that's fun for me as well as my guests, which means minimizing work and stress. For an easy Memorial Day or Mother's Day gathering, few meals take as little effort as a main-dish salad. Once you know what can be done ahead, build your menu around that dish. Try these time-savers.

#### The day before:

- Make vinaigrettes and purees, and store in the fridge in airtight containers.
- Grill the meat or fish, and keep in the refrigerator.

#### The morning of:

- Wash your greens, and prepare any vegetables that need to be sliced or cooked.
- Slice the meat or chicken, cover, and return to the refrigerator.
- Chill the white wine.

#### As guests arrive:

- Toss or assemble salad, and serve.
- Pour the wine.

Go ahead, plan ahead, relax, and enjoy. Since you'll have more time to mingle with guests, you're more likely to have as much fun as they do.



### Grilled Chicken Salad on Tomato Carpaccio

Prep: 15 minutes Cook: 8 minutes  
Makes 6 servings

"Carpaccio" usually refers to thinly sliced raw beef. This salad uses the same technique with tomatoes.

- 1½ pounds skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- 2½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1¼ teaspoons sea salt or table salt, divided
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 6 large ripe tomatoes
- ¼ cup thinly sliced celery
- ¼ cup thinly sliced red onion (¼ cup)
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup thinly sliced fresh basil

**1.** Drizzle chicken breasts with 1 tablespoon olive oil, and season with ¾ teaspoon salt and ¼ tea-

spoon pepper; then grill on both sides until done (about 8 minutes total). Remove, and let rest 5 minutes. Cut into ¼-inch-wide strips, and set aside.

**2.** Slice the tomatoes into ¼-inch-thick slices, and arrange on individual serving plates. Season the tomato slices with ½ tablespoon olive oil and the remaining ½ teaspoon salt.

**3.** In a large bowl, combine chicken strips, celery, red onion, remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil, lemon juice, and salt and pepper to taste. Add the basil, mix, and serve atop the tomato carpaccio. (Serving size: 1 sliced tomato and ⅔ cup of the chicken mixture)

Calories 199 (34% from fat); Fat 8g (sat 1g, mono 4g, poly 1g); Cholesterol 63mg; Protein 25g; Carbohydrate 8g; Sugars 5g; Fiber 2g; Iron 1mg; Sodium 301mg; Calcium 36mg

**Andrea's wine pick:** This salad's all about the tender-sweet tomatoes, so look for the ripe but lively passion fruit, honeydew, and lime flavors of a Napa Valley sauvignon blanc to set them off. Try Frog's Leap 2004 Sauvignon Blanc (\$16.50).

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