How to Make an Olive Oil Salad Dressing Tasty, Healthy, Quick

Alice Henneman
Extension Educator

“Limited and not conclusive scientific evidence suggests eating about 2 tablespoons (23 grams) of olive oil daily may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease due to the monounsaturated fat in olive oil. To achieve this possible benefit, olive oil is to replace a similar amount of saturated fat and not increase the total number of calories you eat in a day.” —Food & Drug Administration

Extra virgin olive oil (EVOO) has a higher natural phenol (a type of organic compound) content than other forms of olive oil. EVOO is the least processed of the various types of olive oil so it retains more phenols. Like monounsaturated fat, the phenols in EVOO also contribute to desirable blood lipid levels (cholesterol and triglycerides).

What healthier way to enjoy olive oil than as part of a dressing served over a salad filled with nutritious fruits and vegetables? A benefit of making a simple oil and vinegar dressing is that you control the amount of ingredients, such as salt and fat. And, you can make a fresh salad dressing from common kitchen ingredients in a couple of shakes or whisks.

Here’s how to make a basic olive oil dressing using the general guidelines for a classic French vinaigrette.

1. Whisk together vinegar and any additional seasonings or flavorings.

2. Slowly add olive oil and whisk in. Or, shake all ingredients together in a small jar with a tight lid.

Let’s focus on making a classic French dressing.

INGREDIENTS
- 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1 small clove garlic, minced

OPTIONAL SEASONINGS
- 1 teaspoon dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon Dijon-type mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon tarragon
- 1/2 teaspoon parsley

For a better flavor, thoroughly mix the olive oil and vinegar by using less dressing.

If not using dressing right away, whisk or shake again before using.

Plan to use about 1 tablespoon of oil/vinegar dressing per two cups of salad. Dress, don’t drown, your salad to keep the dressing calories low. Salad dressing sticks better to dry lettuce and you will be able to save calories by using less dressing. Use a salad spinner or dry your lettuce in a yellow towel before dressing. Instead of dressing the entire salad, make a small jar with a tight-fitting lid. If not using dressing right away, whisk or shake again before using.

Choosing, Storing and Using Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Light, heat and air are enemies of olive oil freshness. Look for containers made from dark glass; tin; or even clear glass placed in a box, or mostly covered by a label advises the UC Davis Olive Center.

Storage of oil in a cool, dark place, such as inside a cupboard in a cooler location away from the light and oven. Refrigeration will cause oil to become cloudy and harden. Olive oil returns to its natural state and consistency when returned to room temperature. If you bought the oil from a cold market, you may wish to refrigerate a portion to prolong its quality until you’re ready to use it.

To enjoy EVOO at its best, UC Davis Olive center recommends an amount that will last on a shelf in about six weeks after being opened. If you limit exposure to light, heat and air, it will maintain a satisfactory quality beyond this. Properly stored, unopened EVOO may maintain its quality for two or more years.

EVOO, because of its more pronounced flavor compared to other forms of olive oil, is most often used to flavor salads and dressings; as a base for marinades; and is drizzled on foods, such as pasta, just before they are served. The flavor profile of EVOO varies from robust to more subtle and fruity. Match the flavor to the ingredients — red meat, for example, may suppress the mildness of EVOO. More delicate foods, such as white fish and veggies, may pair better for a milder EVOO.

References:


How to Make an Olive Oil Salad Dressing Tasty, Healthy, Quick

INGREDIENTS
- 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1 small clove garlic, minced

OPTIONAL SEASONINGS
- 1 teaspoon dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon tarragon
- 1/2 teaspoon parsley

Basic Oil and Vinegar Salad Dressing

Directions (adjust amounts given in table according to personal taste).

1. Whisk together vinegar and any additional seasonings or flavorings.

2. Slowly add olive oil and whisk in. Or, shake all ingredients together in a small jar with a tight lid.

For safety and freshness, serve homemade dressings the same day you make them.

Mail Subscriptions
Sign up at http://lancaster.unl.edu/nebline to be notified by email when the Nebline is posted online.

Mail Subscriptions
Sign up at http://lancaster.unl.edu/nebline to be notified by email when the Nebline is posted online.

Mail Subscriptions
Sign up at http://lancaster.unl.edu/nebline to be notified by email when the Nebline is posted online.

Mail Subscriptions
Sign up at http://lancaster.unl.edu/nebline to be notified by email when the Nebline is posted online.

Mail Subscriptions
Sign up at http://lancaster.unl.edu/nebline to be notified by email when the Nebline is posted online.