

Recipe

Here's a super simple strawberry salad that celebrates the fresh flavors of spring.

First, make a **big green salad** in your favorite bowl, from romaine lettuce or other salad greens. Add about **one cup of sliced fresh strawberries**, which are available in the grocery stores these days.

You might also like to add about a **half cup of walnut pieces**. Toast them in the toaster oven on one cycle of "dark," or else use a cookie sheet and the oven. Toast until fragrant. Cool the nuts completely before adding to the salad. They'll start out a bit chewy, but as they cool, they'll get crunchy. You can toast the nuts a day or two ahead. Save in plastic container.

The real *thrill* of this salad is the dressing:

Strawberry Salad Dressing

- * 1/2 cups sliced strawberries
- * 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar (light colored balsamic vinegar is preferred, since the color is prettier, but the brown stuff works, too)
- * 3 tablespoons sugar (substitute agave nectar, Splenda, whatever you like)
- * 1/2 medium shallot
- * 1/2 clove garlic (about 1/2 teaspoon) peeled
- * 1 cup of your best extra virgin olive oil
- * salt and pepper to taste

Puree the first five ingredients in a blender or food processor until no lumps remain. Then, while the machine is whisking, add the olive oil in a thin stream. Season with salt and pepper. Use up the dressing within 48 hours. It won't be hard!

If you don't have a food processor, chop the strawberries into tiny pieces, and grate the shallot and garlic to get the pieces as small as possible. Lay plastic wrap over your grater before you grate -- then pull away the plastic. The shallot and garlic should be easy to scrape into your dressing. Combine all the other ingredients in a jar. Give it a good shake. Serve over your greens & strawberries.

