

Savory Salads Perfect For Sharing

BY JENNY HARPER
Family Features

Easy. Portable. Crowd-pleaser. Potluck recipes for a large gathering need to hit on all marks, but especially the pleasing part. Everyone should have a dish that's a real winner, one we stake our reputation on, with a recipe everyone begs for.

We all love to have a dish that's a surefire hit, and I'm no exception. I'm known for my baking, and love to share my favorite dessert recipes. But I've got a few savory side dishes that are in my "most requested" file. Though I'm often asked to bring a home-baked dessert, I love to share some of my other offerings—thereby securing my reputation as an all-round great cook.

This Oriental Ramen Salad hits the mark on many levels:

- It's crunchy with a creamy dressing.
- The creamy dressing is made with fat-free evaporated milk, providing rich, creamy flavor but no fat.
- The component parts can be made ahead, stored separately, and transported to the party, so the salad can be tossed together at the last minute.

It can also be boosted to entrée status with the addition of pre-cooked chicken pieces or grilled shrimp.

Take some potluck pointers for summer gatherings:

- Focus on food: If you're coordinating, be as specific as possible when assigning dishes; what types of dishes you want and how many people you'll serve.

- Monitor the menu: Select dishes with a variety of tastes and textures—go for opposites: crunchy/creamy, spicy/mild, soft/firm.

- Keep it cool: Use a decorative ice bucket for cold foods such as chilled side dishes. Fill with ice, and place a container of dish in the bucket.

- Fun, not fussy, service: Line a basket with a bandana or colorful kitchen towels for rolls or muffins; roll up fork and spoon in large napkins.

- Recycle, reuse: If you're toting a dish, bring it in a reusable disposable container that the hostess can keep or throw away.

When it's a potluck, a family reunion or other gathering, check out VeryBestBaking.com for crowd-pleasing ideas. Be prepared to print several copies of the recipes for sharing!

Jenny Harper is Consumer Test Kitchen Project Manager for the Nestlé Test Kitchens and VeryBestBaking.com.



Potluck Pasta Salad

MAKES 8 SERVINGS | PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES | COOK TIME: 10 MINS.

- 1 box Dreamfields Rotini or Penne Rigate
- 4 cups mix-ins (see below) Dressing: Herbed Vinaigrette

Cook pasta according to package directions; drain. Rinse with cold water; drain again.

Add desired mix-ins and half of dressing. Toss to coat. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate until chilled; toss before serving. Add additional dressing, as desired.

Suggested Mix-Ins: Crisp-tender cooked vegetables, raw vegetables, olives, cheese (shredded or crumbled), herbs and meats.

Herbed Vinaigrette

- 1/2 cup white wine vinegar or rice vinegar
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 clove garlic, minced

Oriental Ramen Salad

MAKES 8 SERVINGS

- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 1 package (3 ounces) dry oriental-flavor ramen noodle soup, noodles crumbled and seasoning packet reserved
- 1/2 cup sliced almonds
- 2/3 cup (5 fluid-ounce can) Nestlé Carnation Evaporated Fat Free Milk
- 2/3 cup vegetable oil
- 3 tablespoons white vinegar
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 packages (10 ounces each) romaine-radicchio salad greens
- 4 green onions, sliced diagonally

MELT butter in large skillet. Add crumbled ramen noodles and nuts; cook, stirring constantly, until noodles are golden. Remove from pan; cool.

PLACE evaporated milk, oil, ramen seasoning packet, vinegar and sugar in blender; cover. Blend until smooth.

COMBINE salad greens, noodle mixture, green onions and dressing in large bowl; toss to coat well. Serve immediately.



Photo courtesy Dreamfields Foods

- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh herbs such as thyme, basil, oregano, parsley

In small bowl, whisk together vinegar and oil. Whisk in mustard and garlic. Add herbs.

Note: A favorite prepared vinaigrette may be substituted for the Herbed Vinaigrette.

Obama

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importance of being in New York in the aftermath of the successful raid to find and kill bin Laden, the al-Qaida leader. Obama addressed families who have watched and wondered for nearly a decade whether the government would track down its most infamous enemy.

On this special ground, Obama never mentioned bin Laden's name.

Still, this was where the terrorist inflicted his greatest damage on a similarly sunny day in 2001 when hijacked airliners were crashed into the World Trade Center.

Nearly 200 other people died when a third airliner hit the Pentagon — Vice President Joe Biden led a ceremony there on Thursday, and Bush Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld attended — and others were killed when yet a fourth plane crashed in Pennsylvania.

Enthusiastic, emotional New

Yorkers waited on streets to see the president, but there were few displays like the more raucous exuberance of a few days earlier.

There were happy faces, shouts of "USA! USA!" and flags waved in the crowd, but there also was heavy security and most people were cordoned off blocks from where the president could be seen.

Referring to the daring U.S. raid to take down bin Laden in Pakistan, Obama said of all those who died on Sept. 11: "It says we keep them in our hearts. We haven't forgotten."

Days after the attacks, President George W. Bush stood here with firefighters and a bullhorn. There was a different feel a decade later as another president paid his respects. Obama met with firefighters, then police, before having a solemn moment at ground zero and meeting privately with families of those who died.

"This is a symbolic site of the extraordinary sacrifice that was made on that terrible day," the president said at Engine 54, Ladder 4, Battalion 9. The firehouse in New York's theater district lost 15 firefighters on 9/11, more than any

other firehouse. The fire crews gave him hearty applause.

Obama said the American pursuit of the terrorist leader "sent a message around the world but also sent a message here back home that when we say we will never forget, we mean what we say, that our commitment to making sure that justice is done is something that transcended politics, transcended party."

Bin Laden was shot dead in a raid on his Pakistan compound early Monday in Pakistan, the result of years of painstaking intelligence work and a covert military mission in which none of the U.S. commandos was killed.

The president closed his eyes and clasped his hands at the outdoor memorial where the twin towers of the World Trade Center once dominated the Manhattan skyline.

Now the nearby skyline is filled with construction machinery. The emerging skyscraper informally known as Freedom Tower is more than 60 stories high. Mammoth fountains and reflecting pools mark the footprints of the fallen towers.

Obama spoke with children who lost parents and adults who lost spouses. As he bowed his head, a jetliner screamed by, far overhead.

The president also peppered his brief comments with reminders of the challenges ahead, and his call for a new spirit of national unity.

It wasn't a moment for celebrating the military operation that killed bin Laden; that may come Friday, when the president visits Fort Campbell, Ky., home to the Army unit involved in transporting Navy SEALs in and out of bin Laden's compound. White House officials said Obama intended to privately thank participants in the raid.

Obama said Thursday he hoped the results of the raid on bin Laden's compound showed that "we did what we said we were going to do, and that Americans, even in the midst of tragedy, will come together, across the years, across politics, across party, across administrations, to make sure that justice is done."

Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, who led the city in the

days after the attacks, joined Obama during the day.

Obama invited Bush to join him Thursday in New York, but the former president declined.

Obama's visit came as new details emerged of the operation on bin Laden's Pakistan compound.

A senior defense official said Thursday that only one of the five people killed in the raid was armed and fired a shot — an account that differed from original administra-

tion portrayals of an intense fire-fight. The White House also now says bin Laden was unarmed when he was shot, after officials initially said the terrorist was holding a gun or even firing.

Obama also addressed bin Laden's burial at sea, saying in an interview with CBS' "60 Minutes" that: "Frankly, we took more care on this than, obviously, bin Laden took when he killed 3,000 people."

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P.V.

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the million-hit barrier in March with 925,000 page views (which are counted each time any page on the website is loaded), but recent events helped push it over the edge.

"I think a lot of it is due to the

opt-out," said Beth Rye, new media director for the Press and Dakotan. "We've had a lot of comments going back and forth with our stories, opinions and letters to the editor. And I think a lot of people are coming back and viewing those comments."

Last month's total was a 33 percent increase from April 2010, which had 773,722 page views.

The past year also saw a rise in yankton.net visitors, with 260,256 visitors last month com-

pared to 197,500 during April 2010 (a 32 percent increase).

Wood said he believes the strong numbers are a sign of things to come.

"I think it reminds us all that while the print product continues to be a very viable part of our business and we continue to see a steady print circulation, the

dramatic growth in the online portion tells us where some of the future is for our business."

Top content for April remained relatively unchanged. The yankton.net home page received the most views, followed by obituaries, community and Top Jobs employment link.

MYTH: "Schools don't need more money. They built a \$7 million heated bus barn!"

TRUTH: As part of a larger capital outlay project, \$259,000 was spent on a "bus barn" to protect a \$1.5 million investment.

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