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Strawberry Beet Salad with Homemade Herb Dressing

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It's fresh, not too sweet, not too strong or savory. It's just a soft, semi-sweet, sorta savory salad for pleasant weather days when you need a heavy dose of health in the form of real food. I put it all together in hopes of using up some fresh herbs I'd bought for another purpose. After that recipe didn't work out so well, I decided I needed a bright fresh salad to pick up my mood post failure.

Let's just say this worked out for me.

I'd been bumming around for a few days actually. It wasn't just the most recent episode of a recipe not working out the way I'd hoped. The girls and I were just 'off', not working well together, arguing more than normal and just sort of struggling through our time together. You know what I mean, right? When you and your family are not only on different pages but your reading from completely different books.

Then came the unexpected car expenses, insurance issues and to top it all off I was experiencing an awful case of self-doubt. Convinced I was not a worthy mom let alone an effective single one, I started second guessing my ability to write, create good food, inspire wellness and, well, even to be an effective and engaged friend. Good for nuthin'...humph! That's about how I felt.

Looking back, I now see my slump was all about self-pity, no doubt involved. I'd been slipping in my prayer life, leaning too hard on my own abilities and leaning away from the mysterious ways of the Lord. I'd fallen hard into the trap of wanting to control it all myself and the only thing I succeeded in was worry and weariness leading to more personal problems.

You see, ***personal problems are the result when a peaceful purpose gets lost in the ways of the world***. It's only when we trust in God's unknown ways, in the wonders of what we do not know and when we open our hearts to His wisdom beyond our own understanding that we truly find beauty of being simply and joyfully satisfied...yeah, even when we're bumming about life's stresses and struggles.

After what seemed too long a time to be lost on the road of frustration, ***God grabbed my hand and my heart, gently regaining my attention with a reminder to find purpose in the mundane moments of the day when bigger things weren't going my way.*** He did it with the smile of another mother as I sat at library story time observing her admire her children. At first I felt jealous, perhaps even a bit defensive because my hardships were keeping me from that kind of giddy joy at story time! If things were all ironed out, I'd be smiling too just like that sweet mama.

Then, she turned towards me and said something sweet about the children, including mine. Whap! All defensiveness wore away as I realized I had been stubbornly ignoring my blessings just to remain in my little pity party.

Life is always going to throw us lemons. Expect it. Know it. And yeah, love it. Because it's in the simplest ingredients of every day, real life when God brings us back to the surreal reality allowing us to experience joy amidst troubles. Blessings are only found in the rough because life really isn't ever anything but a little rough.

And so, I return to that joy in a bowl, the sweet salad at hand! Something so simple, the smiling result of my kitchen catastrophes. That's what this salad reminds me of. I made it out of failure and repeated recipe defeat. Then, when I finally dropped my original intentions and created this unexpected, bright breath of fresh air, I tasted sweet success in this simple salad!

So, here is it...a salad now for you that nourished my soul, reminded me of God's real-life promises and will surely bless your body!

Recipe category

Midday Meals: Soups, Salads & Sides [1]

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Ingredients

- 3 large beets (I used golden and red beets)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (I love organic extra virgin so it's fresh, free of pesticides and not too overpowering)
- A pinch of salt and pepper (I prefer pink Himalayan salt and fresh ground pepper)
- ½ cup feta cheese (what you see pictured is Organic Valley, crumble-on-your-own kind)
- 5 cups fresh mixed greens (I used a mix of fresh spinach and spring mix)
- ½ cup walnuts *
- ¾ cup washed and sliced strawberries**
- DRESSING:
- ½ cup olive oil (same type as above)
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard (or use just 1 if you're not a mustard lover)
- 2 to 3 tablespoons of fresh herbs (I used a combination of parsley, dill and thyme--pictured)
- Salt and pepper to taste (same preferences as above)

Recipe Instructions

1. Roast the beets: Preheat the oven to 450F. Wash, peel, and dice the beets. Toss with olive oil and a pinch of salt and pepper. In a medium-sized pan, roast the beets uncovered, for 20 minutes, until soft.
2. While the beets roast, combine the dressing ingredients in a mason jar (or container with lid). Shake the ingredients for about 30 seconds to combine. The girls love this part!
3. Remove the beets from the oven, pour ¼ cup of the dressing over the beets and toss to combine. Set aside to soak and flavor them.
4. In a large bowl, place the salad greens. Pour in the beets (with any extra dressing from the pan). Toss the beets and greens together. Top with cheese, walnuts, and strawberries. Add in extra dressing, if desired.
5. Serve and enjoy...preferably outside in the sunshine with a glass of lemon water or white (organic) wine!

Featured Image



Gallery









Recipe Description

What's not to love when the fresh taste of summer starts popping up on our plates?! This

bowlful of nourishment will please your palate and your cells. Vitamin C and A, filled with folate, cancer fighting phyto-chemicals, blood-cleansing beets and green galore--this one's real and raw, ready to satisfy your taste for a summer salad.

Recipe Notes

*I prefer to lightly roast my walnuts. It brings out the flavor (lessening the bitterness) and adds to the crisp crunch. I purchase RAW walnuts whenever available.

**So, strawberries. Buy them organic whenever you can. While I do prefer many of my foods organic because of the now proven repercussions of pesticides, GMOs, dyes, additives, etc., strawberries are a non-negotiable organic purchase for me because they are one of the most heavily sprayed crops.

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