



<http://dieteticdirections.com/build-satisfying-summer-salads/> - written by Andrea D'Ambrosio

Something about this season makes people more likely to indulge in summer salads. I think it's the freshness of the veggies or maybe it's the crunch. Or perhaps the desire to have something lighter in your tummy while hurrying around doing errands or daytrips. Whatever the reason, if you are loving fresh summer salads but looking for ways to make them extra delicious (and satisfying) you have come to the right place!

Today, I will be sharing how to build summer salads to keep you feeling full and satisfied. I will also highlight some of my favourite recipes and my top salad flavour-boosting hacks.

## Andrea's Anatomy of a Summer Salad:

### 1. Add a Carbohydrate (for Energy)

After you choose your salad green (or choose two different types of greens), I recommend adding a [carbohydrate](#), especially if you are looking for a more filling or satisfying entree salad. Remember that carbohydrates are the body's preferred source of fuel.

If we do not have adequate carbohydrates in our diet, our body will break down muscle mass before fat mass. Low carb intake is also the reason why people tend to get intense sugar cravings.

**[Tip: Add a #carb to salads to make them more satisfying! #FuelUp!](#)**

Ideas for adding carbs to salads:

- Fruit (fresh, dried, canned)
- Legumes (like [lentils](#), beans, chickpeas (these provide protein as well))
- Whole grains ([quinoa](#), rice, [bulgur](#), or crackers on side)
- Starchy vegetable (potato, corn, squash)

### 2. Add a protein

The second component for making a satisfying summer salad is to ensure adequate protein. As a main

macronutrient, [protein](#) helps with the repair and rebuilding of muscle tissue, it also slows digestion down to help us feel full for longer.

Do not over-load on protein at one meal because our bodies will “max out” in the absorption of protein at around 30 grams per meal. In your salad, emphasize dietary protein sources (ie. meat, poultry, fish, [soy](#), [eggs](#), nuts, dairy, legumes). Food sources for protein also provide other essential vitamins and minerals vital to health and well-being.

### 3. Flavour Boosting!

Last, but certainly not least, we have flavour boosting! This is quite possibly the most important. If a salad does not taste great, who wants to eat it? Avoid over-dressed salads, instead the goal should be to lightly coat the greens with dressing.

#### Easy Dressing:

I tend to always use a 2:1 ratio of oil to acid for my homemade dressings. For example, 2 tablespoons of olive oil with 1 tablespoon of balsamic or red wine vinegar. I also recommend tossing your salad in the dressing and giving it a taste for flavour. You might want to add additional acid if it needs more of a boost of flavour. If you wish to get more fancy with dressings, you can add Dijon mustard or garlic for extra flavour.

#### Fresh Herbs:

Last summer I blogged about my [herb garden](#) and then I went crazy adding them to my meals! Boy was that a good idea! [Chef Patrick](#) also recommends adding fresh herbs (like mint, parsley, basil, chives) to salads to give it that extra flavour!

#### Add Savoury:

Try adding something savoury to salads, like avocado or cheese. This flavour-booster is my personal favourite! The saltiness of the cheese can also balance sweetness of fruit as demonstrated in this recipe:

#### Crunch it!

Adding nuts or seeds is another way to bump up the fun and interest in a salad. I often use unsalted sunflower or pumpkin seeds to top my salads. You also receive healthy unsaturated fats (good for cholesterol lowering) and protein!

**[TIP: Adding #nuts or #seeds bumps up the flavour and fun in your salad. More tips here!](#)**

**Think outside the Green:** Salads don't have to always have salad greens; you could always go for the potato, bean or the lentil salads.

#### Bottom Line:

Enjoy the season and satisfying summer salads! Make them interesting by adding different types of ingredients, flavours and textures. Also be sure to balance entrée salad with carbohydrates for energy and protein for fullness.

Now it's your turn! What are some of your favourite salads? Would love to hear your favourite flavour combinations.