Basic Vinaigrette Dressing

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

1 clove garlic

1 medium shallot

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

1 tablespoon of a good wine vinegar*

2 tablespoons good extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons peanut oil**

Salt and freshly ground pepper

Instructions

Finely mince garlic and place in a bowl. Chop shallot into a small dice and add. Stir in mustard and vinegar. Slowly whisk in the two oils until a creamy emulsion is attained. Whisk in salt and pepper to taste.

* My favorite is Badia a Coltibuono, a light and piquant Italian red wine vinegar; Champagne vinegar also works well. Fresh lemon juice in place of the vinegar provides a fresh tart flavor. You might find balsamic vinegar a tad overpowering for this dressing.

**Peanut oil or canola oil mellows the rich olive oil and allows the other flavors to come through.

The dressing can be enlivened with herbs to suite your taste, fresh or dried. Remember 1 teaspoon of a dried herb equals 1 tablespoon of the fresh. Tarragon, with its faint licorice flavor, is one of my favorites. You might consider basil, oregano, savory, chervil, marjoram or a combination.

Be careful not to overdress your salad. The dressing should just lightly coat the ingredients. Toss just before serving.