America's Next Top Salad



I've been cooking so much more since the beginning of the year. It's kinda freaking me out. Each time I make something I get a little more brave. Last week I put my hands into ground turkey meat for crying out loud. I didn't die. No, I lived, but I sure did make a face or 12 and I might have squealed. I haven't been ready to relive that experience for the blog yet. It'll happen. I just need a minute or two to get over my experience of making Jewish Meatloaf. I know. What does that even mean? Jewish Meatloaf? We'll get there. Whatevs.

NEXT!

This week I've been craving a big salad for whatever reason. Maybe it's because I've also had a moment or two with fast-food? Probably. I had giant spinach salad at work a couple of days ago and I've been needing more ever since. I was partially inspired by Oprah's Meat Free Mondays challenge but I'm obviously a couple of days late. Sometimes I move a little slow. I was also inspired to make a big salad by my friend Kelly. I was complaining last week about how expensive groceries are and she told me I was going to the wrong place. I was going to a big supermarket chain here in Chicago. Today? I went to a small local grocery store. Let me tell ya…I saved some serious cash. Produce doesn't have to cost a million dollars? WOW.

Anywho. So I started researching salads on the internet. Then I realized that I was researching salads on the internet. I mean, how silly is that? I've eaten vegetables.

I know what vegetables I like. So…why the hell research something like that? I decided to get of my ass and go stand in the produce section at the store and figure it out. I encourage you to do the same. My feeling is that vegetables are vegetables. It's not like you're going to pick something for your salad that's going to clash. You're not picking out sweater sets, you're making food. A salad. Be brave. It's easier than you think. My end result is what my husband called, "The BEST salad in the world." Sure. So sometimes he exaggerates. Whatever. I like the encouragement.

I will say this about your efforts in the produce department. A couple chopped veggies go a really really REALLY long way. My salad could feed an army of starving Jews. I'm talking this thing is big enough for a family reunion. It's big, y'all. So be careful. I'm hoping we eat it all before it goes bad.

Ingredients:

Baby Spinach (why use stupid lettuce when you could have something dark and gorgeous?)

2 squash

1 zucchini

1 red pepper

1 bunch of scallions

1/4 of a small red onion

3 carrots (shredded)

1 head of brocoli

3 eggs

1 small packet of blue cheese

1 can of garbanzo beans

1 can of beats

1 small can of sweet corn

1/2 small bag of walnuts

2 green apples

I cut everything and threw it into a big bowl (the one pictured above), then I realized that I like everything chopped really fine in a salad. I like to be able to shove a salad in my mouth without having to waste too much effort on big chunks of lettuce or giant pieces of brocoli. I'm not going to lie. The salad is kinda amazing. It also took a long time to chop all of this stuff down into small pieces. I was going to be all Martha Stewart and make my own salad dressing but the salad took longer than I expected and I stared at different options from Martha's cookbooks and became overwhelmed. I had a bottle of balsamic vinaigrette in the fridge. That seemed way too easy…so I went for that instead. I'm going to work on making this a little smaller. Say…maybe something just big enough for TWO people? At least I didn't spend a million dollars on making it happen.