

HOW TO BUILD AN ANTI-INFLAMMATORY VINAIGRETTE

1. Proportions

All good vinaigrettes are made from a combination of fat and acid. The most common ratios are 1:2 or 1:3 parts vinegar:oil. Only you will know how acidic you prefer dressing. Experiment with proportions, then take note of the amounts. In the future, you can eyeball it.

FAT

Oils—extra virgin olive, sesame, peanut, avocado, walnut...

*Fat is important for helping us to absorb all of the nutrients in your vegetables. Some vitamins and minerals from fruits and vegetables are fat-soluble, so if you don't consume a fat with them, you won't gain the benefit!

*These healthy oils contain omega 3s, serving as an anti-inflammatory power house!

ACID

Vinegars—balsamic, sherry, apple cider, white wine, champagne, red wine, rice wine...

*Some vinegars, such as unfiltered apple cider vinegar, may act as a probiotic that keeps your gut and digestive system healthy.

Citrus—lime, orange, lemon...

2. Don't Forget the Emulsifier!

You don't technically have to use an emulsifier, but adding one to will make your dressing creamy, while still fresh-tasting. Mustard is the most common emulsifier, and usually a pantry staple. Other emulsifiers include mayonnaise, egg yolk, honey, or maple syrup.

3. Add your Aromatics

Optimize your dressing with aromatics, also serving as anti-inflammatory components!

HERBS—parsley, basil, tarragon, mint, rosemary, oregano, thyme, cilantro... (all antioxidant and antimicrobial activities)

SPICES— turmeric (contains curcumin, a potent antioxidant that dramatically reduces inflammation), cayenne (contains flavonoids and carotenoids – antioxidants that scavenge free radicals to protect against the cellular damage as well as capsaicin which may help with pain relief), cinnamon (may help manage blood glucose by activating insulin receptors), black pepper, cardamom, cloves (extremely rich in antioxidants and anti fungal)

FRESH PRODUCE—ginger (assists with digestion and fighting inflammation), garlic (anticancer and heart healthy), shallots, onions, chives

RECIPE | Spiced Lentil Salad

Salad—

- 2 cups dried lentils
- 1 small red onion, diced
- 1 cup currants or chopped raisins
- 1/3 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/3 cup capers
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta (optional)

Spiced Anti-inflammatory Dressing—

- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tbsp dijon mustard
- 1 1/2 tsp garam masala (aromatic Indian spice blend)
- 1/2 tsp turmeric
- 1/4 tsp cayenne
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsp pepper

Rinse lentils well, and drain. Place in a pot and cover with a 3-4 inches of water, bring to a boil, and reduce to simmer. Check lentils for doneness after 15 minutes. Be careful to not overcook! Overcooking will ruin this dish!

In a small bowl, whisk all ingredients for dressing until combined.

Remove lentils from heat and rinse with cold water. Transfer to a large bowl. Add red onion, currants, walnuts, and capers to lentils. Pour dressing over lentils and toss until coated. Top with feta (if using) at the end.

Enjoy on its own, over a bed of arugula, or with a pan-seared fish!