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Wilted Kale Salad with a Creamy Chipotle Dressing

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Inspired by the classic kale & avocado salad, this dish was a hit in NY when I made it, almost on a daily basis, for everyone at The Plant.

[Postscript] The Plant is no longer open.

Chipotle peppers are jalapeno that have been smoked, and so are not raw. However, I love to use them as they have such a great taste and you don't need to use many! I have provided an alternative combination of ingredients in the recipe as a substitute to using jalapenos that will give a similarly distinctive taste.

This is a real hearty meal with a kick that's perfect for those cold winter days!

Wilted Kale Salad with a Creamy Chipotle Dressing

Serves 2 – 4

For the wilted kale

2 heads kale (this will seem like a lot but will wilt down when the salt is added)
2 teaspoons salt
1 cup baby tomatoes, sliced
1/2 cup hulled hemp seeds

For the dressing

2 avocados
1 chipotle pepper*
1/2 cup olive oil
1 teaspoon agave
1/4 cup lemon juice
Chipotle soak water as needed to blend

*If not using chipotle peppers, substitute with 1/2 teaspoon each of onion powder, cumin, chili powder, garlic powder and tamari/nama shoyu.

- Remove the stems and then wash and cut the kale into small pieces. Place into a bowl, add salt and start to massage the kale until it wilts and takes on a 'cooked' texture.
- Add the tomatoes and hemp seeds to the bowl and mix in by hand.
- Blend all remaining ingredients in a high-speed blender until creamy and mix into kale by hand.

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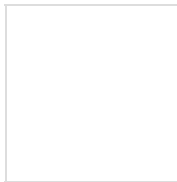
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Danielle

AMAZING!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

[2 months ago](#)

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Gaby

I love this salad, make a double or triple batch because you will want to eat more of it. it's so good! :)

[2 months ago](#)

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Gaby

Actually salt is very healthy for the body to maintain its internal homeostasis. your kidneys believe it or not actually need it in order to function correctly with in the loop of hindley for water re-absorption. The salt is also good for your body's nervous system in that it helps conduct the nerve impulses with in the body, the sodium being a metal acts as an excellent conductor. Very High amounts of salt are not recommended for the body but exact quantities vary from person to person depending on lifestyle factors such as, levels exercise, diet, and family history health history. Sea salt is also a great source of trace minerals as well as other electrolytes. :)

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pj

I don't salt my kayle because salt is not healthy for the body

[4 months ago](#)

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Desireebro

In addition to Gaby's response... the type of salt that you are referring to that is not good for the body is in fact table salt which is a man made salt. Our body needs, and utilizes the salt from the earth. This includes sea salts and another excellent salt is The Original Himalayan Crystal Salt.

I hope this helps.

[1 week ago](#) [in reply to pj](#)

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Davis_tarad

I'm in love! Just made this and ate it. It's surprisingly filling and fantastically yummy!
Thanks Russell

[4 months ago](#)

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Gill

Ha! 4 years since the original post - and here I am - a newbie - eating kale and avocado salad - and all my questions already answered below! I over-glugged the agave and ended up with something a tad on the sweet side - will be more careful next time!

[8 months ago](#)

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betty

Hi Russell!

OMG this is my FAVORITE salad! I crave it. I simply cannot wait to make more of your recipes. They are so much simpler than many others I have tried. Thank you for sharing your passion

[1 year ago](#) [1 Like](#)

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Laura

Ohhh! I just made this, as a matter of fact I am just eating it. I knew it would be good! I just had to use savoy cabbage(??) as no kale in this country. I'll keep looking for kale because I am going to make this to all my friends and family, I love it.

..and anyway your website is so inspirational and beautiful, thank you. And once I thought raw food would be dull, mhah!

[1 year ago](#)

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K&M

This recipe makes for a perfect Christmas dish. We use our biggest round serving dish and shape the Wilted Kale Salad into a wreath... then, place crackers in the center. We've been making this recipe as a wreath every Christmas for the last 3 years. People really love the way it looks and tastes!

[1 year ago](#) [1 Like](#)

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Marion

Russell,

I made this dish for lunch today. It was awesome! So hearty and a real filler. It is Sunday and our health food store is closed, so I went to our local grocer and found pine nuts to substitute for the hemp seeds. It was so delicious! I also liked how quickly I could make this - work full time and making quick raw food dishes is very appealing.

[2 years ago](#)

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Angela

Russell!

You are a genius!

I made this for myself yesterday and it was amazing! Just utterly delightful... Who knew kale could be this good??

I didn't use chipotle peppers, and I forgot to add the hemp seeds! But it still turned out to be awesome :)

Thank you so much for sharing this, and I can't wait to try your other recipes!

With lots of love and gratitude,

Angela

[2 years ago](#)

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Caroline

Am currently eating this recipe as I write.

Party in my mouth!!!!

I'll be so sad when my bowl reaches empty. Thank you for posting such a gorgeous recipe!

[2 years ago](#)

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Tina

I just tried your recipe. Loved it, OMG. :P

[2 years ago](#)

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Tina

Hi Russell,

Looks very delicious.

How much is 4 heads of kale in cups or grams?

Can I use something else instead of the hemp seeds or leave them out? (I have sunflower seeds, sesame seeds and flax

seeds)

Thanks :)

From Russell: Use around 1kg of kale and the hemp seeds can be left out or replaced with any of your favourite seeds.

[2 years ago](#)

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Jennie

Hi Russell,

Great recipe. A few questions.

Can I substitute hulled hemp seeds with hulled sesame seeds?

Can I substitute agave with raisins or honey?

(I live in Asia, American ingredients are hard to find.)

From Russell:

Yes to both questions! Honey would be better than raisins.

[3 years ago](#)

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saskia

I made this today- didn't have everything (hemp seeds) so added sunflower, and used a regular tomatoe. I can't wait to try it tomorrow since I heard it was better the second day. yum!

[3 years ago](#)

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Rita.A.W.

OK, I have looked and looked for you recipe book, not seeing it. Do you have one? If so, what's the title? -Rita.A.W.

From Russell: Wow, so many people asking me for a book! Thanks :-) It's a work in progress.

[3 years ago](#)

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JenDiggity

I love kale-avocado salad so very much and I can't wait to try this version. Regarding concern about the salt, you can always rinse the kale when you're done wilting it!

From Russell: "Thank you for the feedback! I will be adding a link to the recipe book in the future. I will be adding a link to the recipe book in the future."

From Russell: That's very true, yes you can. In fact I have done that before when needing to tone down the saltiness, thanks for reminding me :-)

[3 years ago](#)

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Nicole

I would like to try this recipe out, but I am really concerned about the amount of salt that's being used. Is there any way to cut it down to at least half the amount or omit it entirely?

From Russell: Hi Nicole. The kale won't wilt without the use of salt so you can't omit it entirely, but you can try using half the amount, yes. Remember the amounts shown are for a big batch to serve up to 6 people, so if you're making a smaller portion for just you the salt used would be only 1 teaspoon or less.

[3 years ago](#)

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Denise

I live in France (Paris) and, as far as I know, can't get kale here. Is there another green that could make a good substitution for kale? Thanks so much....

From Russell: Spinach works well and doesn't need to be softened as much.

[3 years ago](#)

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melissa

i made 2 versions...with and without chipotles. the one with chipotles is a far better recipe. it is so good. the next day its even better. it starts to get a cheesy flavor. mmmmm

[3 years ago](#)

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Benjy

I'm a little confused by the wilting directions. You pour the salt on the stemless kale leaves and then rub them until they are "cooked"? How long does this take? Do you rub them constantly? This looks like a great recipe.

From Russell: The "wilting directions"? Are you saying my directions are wilting ? Lol. Okay, the wilting: mix the salt with the kale and massage for about 30 seconds to a minute, by which time the kale should have wilted, you'll see what I mean when you try it.

[3 years ago](#)

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Lana

Russell,

I've been meaning to try this recipe since you posted it last Dec & made it today. It is by far the GREATEST kale dish I

have every tasted. I am so hooked & sent my husband out to get more kale today as I will be eating this daily!

Thanks for such a great blog & awesome recipes.

Lana~AKA...RJL:)

[3 years ago](#)

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Russell James

Hi Melissa, chipotle peppers are smoked jalepinos, so yes, it would work, but you wouldn't get the smoked flavour in the salad. Test the spicyness before adding the chilli powder.

[3 years ago](#)

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melissa

would it work if i used fresh jalapeno peppers with the spices? should i leave out the chilli pepper?

[3 years ago](#)

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Russell James

Caroline,

I would start with something like 2t onion powder, 2t cumin, 1t chilli powder, 1t garlic powder and 1T tamari/nama shoyu and adjust to your taste.

[4 years ago](#)

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Caroline

For the raw variation, what proportions of each ingredients would you recommend?

[4 years ago](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Russell James

Very cool. I'll be looking forward to seeing your photos!

[4 years ago](#)

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Carla

Just so you know, this salad has been a favorite amongst clients and friends... I made it for a bunch of us attending the Institute for Integrative Nutrition who are staying with me and we took it for lunch for two days straight. You're keeping us alive!

P.S. I got the camera...and the lense! Watch out world!

[4 years ago](#)

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Russell James

So you finally got that kale to wilt eh Carla?!!

Perhaps you could take some down to Kristen & Anna? Maybe not, they never left you any! :0)

[4 years ago](#)

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Carla

Hi Russell!!

I FINALLY got to try the salad. There was never any left over at The Plant for me to enjoy! Now I had it ALL to myself. My husband loved it too. Thanks for sharing your recipe. It was awesome.

NYC misses you!

Cheers,
Carla

[4 years ago](#)

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Russell James

Kristen: I'd forgotten about your tahini variation. Absolutetly delicious!

Dhru: Thanks for posting on your site...enjoy!

[4 years ago](#)

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Dhru

I'm feeling this salad. Can't wait to try it this weekend.

[4 years ago](#)

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Kristen

This is the greatest salad in the world!!!! We miss it so much here at The Plant! I think i've had dreams about it.

This recipe is perfect for getting your greens, is sooo filling, and is nice and tender instead of leafy and chewy.

A comment from a user who has been following the recipe for a while and is looking for more information.

Awesome recipe! I have a little variation, too (hope you don't mind, Russell!): use sesame tahini instead of a avocado to get an extra calcium boost! Woo!

[4 years ago](#)

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