

# Unusual veggies make salads extra-special

Bored with the plain tossed lettuce salad? Well, check out the local Farmers Market and/or grocery stores and take a look at the variety of salad makings to create exotic taste delights. These garden-crisp, luscious veggies make salads even better. Try mixing them with fruits, vegetables or meats for something really outstanding.

Arugula, known as rocket salad, has a refreshing mustard-like flavor. It is excellent when combined with sweet or bitter greens to give salad a spicy taste. Arugula grows in small clusters with dark green leaves with small but somewhat long stems. Break off the leaves and sprinkle over a peppery salad for a taste treat.

Radicchio (Italian) is a relatively newcomer to the market. It is a member of the chicory family and adds a mild bitterness to salads. Heads range from the size of a golf ball to a grapefruit. Look for bright red to dark maroon heads with veined leaves somewhat like a cabbage. Traditionally it is served warm with a splash of vinegar and oil.

Oak leaf lettuce, named for its oak leaf shape, is available in ruby red

**Oak leaf lettuce, named for its oak leaf shape, is available in ruby red and pale green.**

and pale green. It has a sweet flavor so a light dressing would complement it very nicely. These are best when mixed in a salad with a light dressing. Frilly edged greens and red-tipped leaves are delicate in texture and flavor.

**ENDIVE CAN BE** Belgian, chicory or curly endive, or escarole. Belgian endive has spear-shaped leaves pale green to almost white with slightly ruffled pale yellow edges. Choose heads that are firm and light. The texture is crisp and juicy with a pleasantly bitter taste. Wrap Belgian endive in plastic and store in refrigerator. Use within a couple days.

The other extreme of endive is curly, almost prickly with dark green outer leaves and tender pale



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green inner ones. Use the inner leaves in salads raw while the outer leaves may be blanched, then served warm or cold. Escarole is also a member of this chicory family. The head has dark green outer leaves loosely packed and slightly furled, while the heart is tender and pale green. Chicory and escarole are high in Vitamin A and contain some potassium and iron.

Watercress is a member of the cabbage family and is used as a garnish or ingredient in a salad. It has a definite peppery flavor. Choose

crisp tender leaves with uniform green color. Stand watercress in a glass of water covered with a plastic bag. By this method it should keep a week in a plastic bag in the refrigerator, you will need to use it sooner.

Don't forget the spinach for the salad. Spinach is available with curly leaves or flat, tender dark green ones. Most spinach is sandy and needs to be washed thoroughly. Do not soak spinach or you will lose nutrients.

Iceberg lettuce is the largest-selling salad green in the United States

and the most popular cold vegetable. Iceberg's main virtues are that it costs less than many of the other types of greens, it's easy to shred and stays fresh longer. However, it is probably the least nutritious.

**OTHER TYPES** of lettuce, romaine (Cos) has crisp oblong leaves pale yellow-green and very tender. Romaine goes well with many types of salads, especially the classic Caesar salad.

Boston, buttercrunch and bibb lettuce come next in popularity. Boston or butter is moderate in size with furled leaves. They are pale green, soft and delicate. Bibb is just a smaller version of Boston, although the color is generally a little darker and it has a crunchier texture.

The combinations, color and textures are almost endless when talking about salad "fixings." Popular

Italian plum tomatoes are yellow or red and are sweeter than the traditional tomatoes. Peppers are red, yellow, orange and purple. All taste similar to green peppers, but each has its own subtle sweetness. Enoki mushrooms are unique. They have a crisp texture and a mild flavor. These are the mushrooms that are slender, long-stemmed, looking like a pencil with an eraser on the top. To prepare, simply trim off the spongy mass at the base (not the eraser part). Purchase firm, white to creamy white in color.

Salads need not be dull and boring anymore. Visit the market, purchase something new and mix together these unique exotic leaves as a base for dishes of food, or mix them all together for a tossed salad or use as a garnish. You will be pleasantly surprised at the glorious low-calorie results.

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**UNEXPLAINED WEIGHT LOSS PUZZLES SCIENTISTS**

**FINLAND** — The unexpected weight loss experienced by members of a test group has puzzled medical researchers at a leading Finnish university. Scientists were testing a naturally-occurring compound for its ability to lower blood cholesterol levels when, to their surprise, they found that every person who took the formula had lost a significant amount of weight.

The formula was then tested at another prestigious European university hospital. Again, all patients lost weight even though they did not change their eating habits. The report detailing this study, published in the British Journal of Nutrition, stated: "Body weight was significantly reduced even though the patients were specifically asked not to alter their dietary habits."



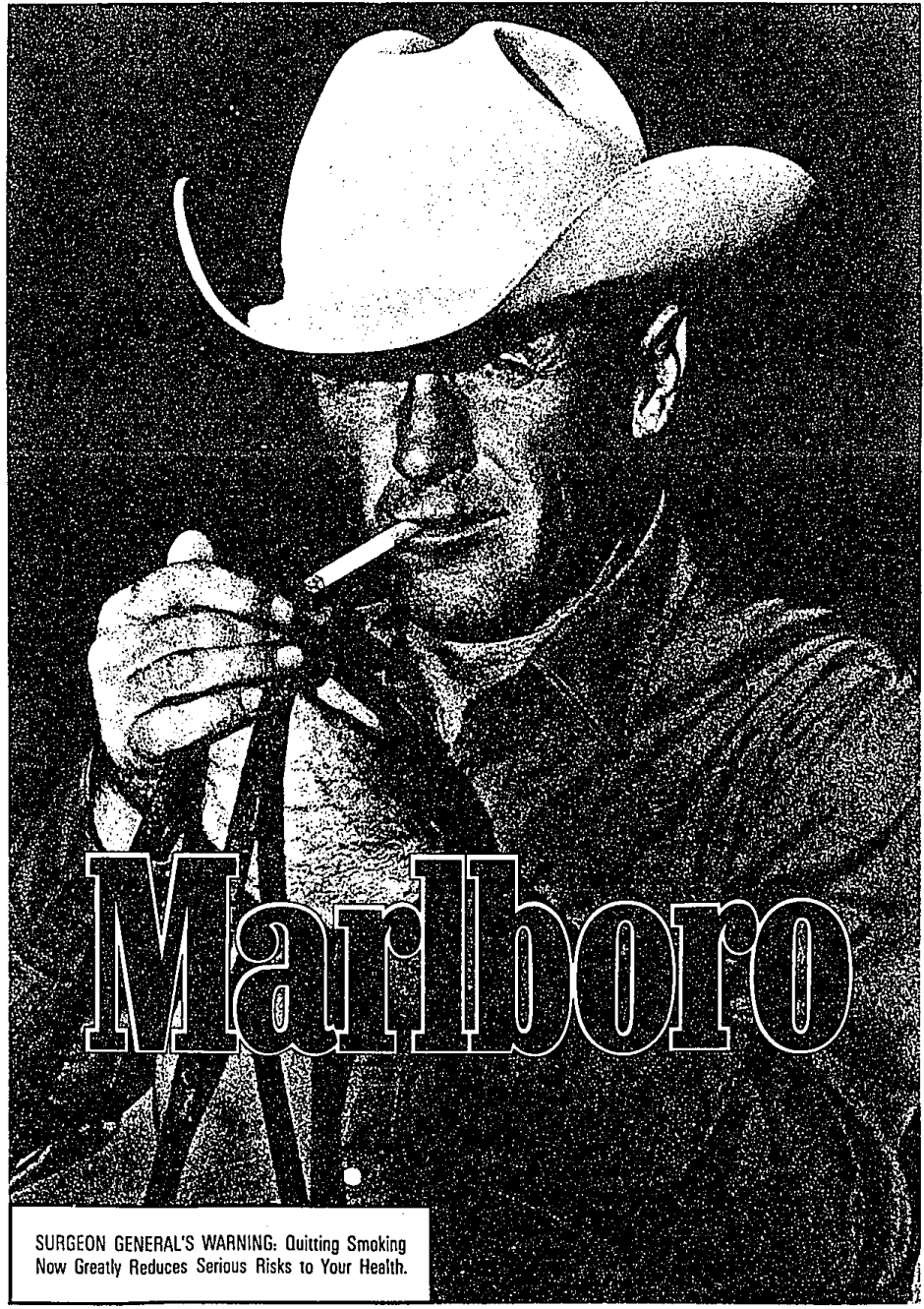
This woman reportedly lost 104 pounds while on the formula.

While it is still not entirely clear how the formula induces weight loss, some scientists believe this compound actually alters the way the body digests food; when taken before mealtime it bonds with food and suppresses calorie absorption. Unabsorbed calories would pass through and out of the digestive system.

The formula is marketed in capsule form in the United States under the trade name Cal-Ban 3000. A firm located in Tampa, Florida has exclusive North American distribution rights to Cal-Ban 3000. A company spokesman reported that the formula is 100% natural and has been clinically tested for safety. Review of the customer files of this company revealed the names of hundreds of people who have lost as much as 20, 40 or 80 or more pounds overall with Cal-Ban 3000. This appears to be a golden opportunity for people who are plagued by fat and cellulite that they can't seem to lose by conventional methods.

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