

(My) Five-Element Salad (well, actually 7) - inspired from Edward Espe Brown's *Tomato Blessings and Radish Teachings*, pp. 141-142.

"I am not a fan of salads that have innumerable ingredients—lettuce, grated carrot, tomato, mushroom, bell pepper, shredded red cabbage, etc.—as though more made better, and then are drowned in some kind of gloppy dressing so the colors are indistinct anyway. I want the ingredients to fit together with some balance.

Five-Element is my name for a salad I learned about while working at Greens Restaurant. The five elements are lettuce, a fruit, a nut, a cheese, and a wild-card flavor kicker, such as olive, caper, radish, sun-dried tomato, or, in this case, red onion pickle. The dressing should be flavorful and interesting, but usually clear enough to see the colors of the salad. The variations are endless."

"I follow the Chinese principle of having an odd number of ingredients: one, three, five, seven. See how that works for you."

"All of the ingredients may be readied well ahead of time and assembled shortly before serving."

Salad

Lettuce, red leafy, 1 head
Spinach leaves, 1 good handful
Roma Tomato, sliced
Dried black mission figs, a good handful, sliced and pan roasted
Walnuts, a handful, roughly chopped and pan roasted
Red onion (1/3), finely sliced and then chopped
Feta cheese, crumbled on top and tossed last.

Dressing

Olive Oil, splash
Balsamic, dash
Rice wine vinegar
1/2 lime juice
1/2 lemon juice
Sugar
Salt
Pepper
Italian herbs, dash