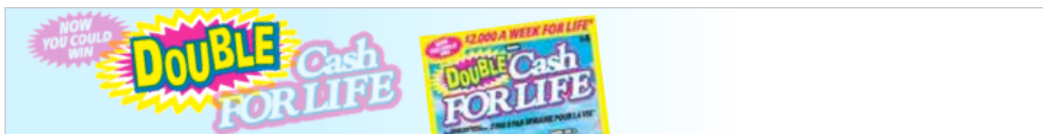


canoe.ca



kingstonlife


[Home](#) [Subscribe](#) [About Us](#) [Contact Us](#) [Sign-In](#)

In This Issue

[Home > Food and Wine >](#)[From the Editor](#)[Food and Wine](#)[Shopping](#)[Travel](#)[Arts & Culture](#)[Business Directory](#)[A Good Word](#)[After Hours](#)[Community Spirit](#)[What's Happening](#)[Online Poll](#)[Media Kit](#)[Welcome Back Student Magazine](#)[Contests](#)

Quick Search:

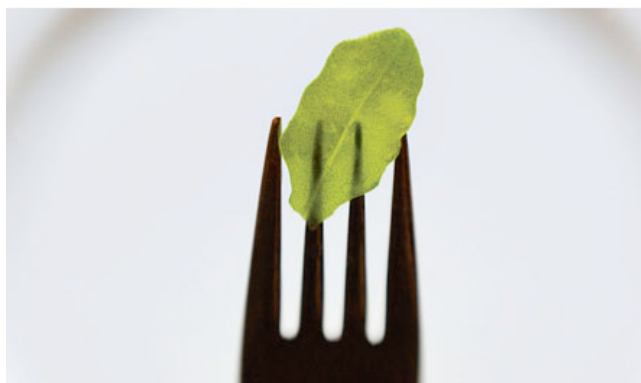
Search

[Advanced Search](#)
ECHO
HAIR STUDIO
Best Western
 1217 Princess St.
 613-549-2211
 1-800-567-8800
www.bestwestern.kingston.on.ca
KINGSTON
HUMANE
SOCIETY
Great Family
Rates On Leisure
Weekend Getaways
NEW
RESTAURANT?
 let us know and we'll gladly
 share the news in our next issue!

FOOD AND WINE

the big salad

move over, dinner plate; a former side dish is now the main event



BY JOSEPHINE MATYAS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY BERNARD CLARK

As the mercury creeps up the scale of the thermometer, every gourmand begins to dream of salads. Sometimes you crave that blend of vegetables with such intensity that you can see it — taste it — before you've even walked into the restaurant.

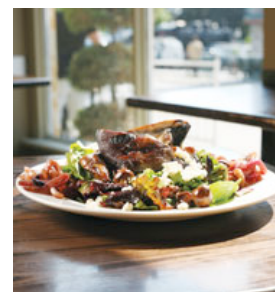
Wedges of vine-ripened tomato, lettuce that's crunchy, mushrooms that aren't. All doused in tangy balsamic vinegar and smooth extra-virgin olive oil. Crisp salads — a perfect entree on a hot, sultry summer day — and salads that are a contrast in temperatures — warmed ingredients piled atop fresh greens that have been plucked from the garden.

Once restricted to side-dish status, salads are now being designed and re-invented to hog the spotlight as the main part of a meal. So, the gloves are off and chefs everywhere have gone wild creating meaty salads, introducing salad ingredients from around the globe (think couscous, Thai chilies or cremini mushrooms) and zipping together flavourful salads that contain — gasp! — not a single leaf of lettuce.

In Canada, where we battle such a short growing season, summertime and farmers' markets herald a time when local ingredients can reign. It's a bonanza time for chefs from the area's restaurants — the best time for them to shop locally, whether from a larger supplier, a stall at the Kingston Market or a stand at the end of a rural laneway.

Other parts of the world have a longer growing season and seem to have a little extra time on their hands — and creating a salad takes a more serious turn. Consider the town of Pulpi in Spain, where, in the fall of 2007, a team of more than 20 slicers, choppers, dicers and tossers created the world's largest salad. It tipped the scale at 6,700 kg of lettuce, tomatoes, onions, peppers and olives. Just mixing the ingredients burned up more than three hours of the cooks' daytime schedule.

DISHERS FEATURED



The Mixed Mushroom Salad at Wooden Heads.



The Copper Penny's Grill House Salad.



Four different taco salads, four different toppings: mesquite-grilled chicken breast, fajita steak, vegetarian and seasoned Mexican beef at Lone Star Texas Grill.

Now, *that's* dedication to getting your daily servings of veggies.

Wooden Heads

Maybe your Slavic grandmother taught you how to forage through the woods for wild mushrooms. It's a treasured skill that's passed down through the generations in certain east European countries. But you're probably not Slavic, and your grandmother shops for her white button mushrooms in the produce section at the local grocery store. What's a mushroom lover to do? Wooden Heads has got just the thing for all of your fungi cravings.

Take a seat inside, next to Wooden Heads' signature beehive-shaped, wood-fired, red-brick oven. If you're looking for mushrooms, you don't need to look any further than the Insalate section of the intriguing menu. Tell your server that you want the Mixed Mushroom Salad, and then be prepared for a meal-size plate that plays with mixing temperatures and textures. The greens are cold and crisp; the mushrooms are warmed; and the garnishes are cool.

The Mixed Mushroom Salad is perfect for the indecisive mushroom lover. Large, meaty portobello mushrooms are cooked atop the grill; oyster mushrooms are baked in the wood oven with the doors closed — the smoke penetrates them and enhances their natural woody flavour; and whole button mushrooms are simmered stovetop in their own juices, flavoured with bay leaf and thyme, balsamic vinegar and white wine vinegar.

Just before serving, the three varieties of cooked mushrooms are gently mixed together, quickly roasted in the oven to heat them up, and then flavoured again with balsamic vinegar. The mushrooms are arranged on top of a plate of mesclun salad mix and romaine lettuce (for extra crunchiness) that has been tossed in a balsamic vinaigrette dressing. Creamy feta cheese is crumbled on top — its milky flavour combines well with the vinegars in the dish. A final garnish of grilled red onions rings the plate.

If you enjoy the rich and complex flavour of balsamic vinegar, you'll love this salad. And if you crave mushrooms, you're going to get the fix you need. It's not like your Slavic grandmother spent her Sunday afternoon scouring the woods for the ingredients. But it's a pretty close second.

Wooden Heads, 192 Ontario St., 613-549-1812

Copper Penny

Three decades ago, if a restaurant tried to serve chickpeas, grilled chicken and potatoes on a bed of greens, tossing together hot and cold temperatures, there'd be uproar in the dining room. Fortunately, the days when the salad selection was limited to garden, Caesar or Greek are long past, left behind in the dust as chefs mix and match flavours and ingredients that were once kept quite separate. The Copper Penny's Grill House Salad is a perfect example. It's a meal-size salad served at both its original downtown location (it was around for the early salad days — in operation since 1981) and the newer west Kingston location.

The Grill House Salad is what you order when you are fraught with indecision: starter salad or main course? Vegetables or meat? Hot or cold? Thai or Cajun flavours? It's a dish with a little bit of everything. On the hot side, there is Cajun chicken breast, grilled and then sliced into long, thin strips. Ditto for the mini red potatoes, halved, coated with a flavourful mixture of olive oil, rosemary, garlic, salt and ground pepper, and then grilled. The tender, thin skin stays on with this variety, adding a bit of colour to the dish (this helps boost the fibre count, as well).

It's assembly time, starting with the cold part of the dish: the mixed greens, iceberg lettuce, chick peas, yellow and green beans, and quartered fresh tomatoes receive a quick squeezing of fresh lemon and a touch of rich olive oil, followed by a drizzling of Copper Penny's sweet and spicy Thai vinaigrette. The greens are piled in a bowl and the blackened chicken strips are pin wheeled across the top. The roasted red tomatoes line the side, sesame seeds are sprinkled on top and the whole plate is garnished with citrus wedges and pea sprouts.

Cool with Thai flavours underneath, warm with a Cajun stamp on top. The times, they are a changin' . . . and thank goodness for all the culinary changes on the salad side of the menu.

**Copper Penny, 759 Bayridge Dr., Kingston, 613-389-4677;
and 240 Princess St., Kingston, 613-549-4257**

Lone Star Texas Grill

Lone Star is known for its huge taco salad bowls — and for good reason. This menu standard is chockablock with ingredients; there are four different taco salads to choose from, and the whole thing is edible, right down to the crisp flour tortilla that is deep fried into the shape of a serving bowl. There's just something so very satisfying about eating the serving bowl as well as the contents.

Begin with the Lone Star classic, the gratis house-made chips and salsa. The large tortilla machine holds court in the centre of the room that once housed Kingston's fire hall,



**Mandarin Chicken Salad at
Serves You Right.**

cranking out soft flour tortillas almost as fast as the kitchen staff can cut them into wedges, deep fry them and get them to the tables. The Lone Star atmosphere is an essential backdrop to complement the Tex-Mex dishes served: tables covered with red and white checked oilcloth, limestone and red-brick walls, neon signs, chalkboards hawking specials and a sound system that leans heavily toward country and classic rock hits. The family setting, combined with the bustling atmosphere, means this is a perfect place to bring the kids.

Four different taco salads, four different toppings: mesquite-grilled chicken breast, fajita steak, vegetarian and seasoned Mexi-beef. The salad base is built of crisp romaine, iceberg lettuce, spring-mix greens, shredded red cabbage, shredded carrots, tomato wedges and sliced black olives. The meat goes on top, and the tortilla bowl is garnished with pinto beans with a moderate kick (thanks to the jalapenos and Tex-Mex seasonings), grated mild Jack or cheddar cheese, and vitamin-rich guacamole. It comes with a choice of five types of dressing on the side. Notch up the spice factor and go with the honey-jalapeno house dressing.

It's the staff favourite.

Lone Star Texas Grill, 251 Ontario St., 613-548-8888

Serves You Right

You may know this space on Princess Street as the former home of Bistro Delight, the bakery and small restaurant that made a solid mark on the Kingston scene with its home-baked European-style rye bread. Last fall, Bistro Delight was taken over and integrated into the operations of Serves You Right, a café that made the move from its original location on Wellington Street. Confused by the shuffle of addresses? Not to worry: the rye bread stayed and the owners of Serves You Right set up shop and brought along their bright café menu, fresh sandwiches, jazzy background music, and their very popular all-day breakfast option. "People just kept asking for bacon and eggs for breakfast, lunch and dinner," shrugs general manager David Albert. They eventually bowed to the demand.

Salads for breakfast? Hmmm . . . that one may be a harder sell, but the Mandarin Chicken Salad is a popular option from the Serves You Right menu. It's a full, meal-size serving with a lively mixture of ingredients that Albert describes as "colours all over the place." The foundation is a mixed salad — romaine and iceberg lettuce — topped with cucumbers julienned into thin matchsticks, grated carrots, diced tomatoes and green and red peppers. The pièce de résistance is a warm, grilled chicken breast, thinly sliced and fanned atop the riot of colour the vegetables create. The salad is garnished with mandarin orange slices and crunchy Asian noodles, then drizzled with the restaurant's homemade vinaigrette dressing.

And if you don't mind the addition of a few carbs to your diet, you can ask for a slice or two of Serves You Right's homemade bread. In addition to the rye, there's whole wheat, white and a selection of baguettes. For a bigger appetite still, all of the sandwiches in their sandwich gallery are made only with the café's own, baked-from-scratch breads. You can choose anything from the Swiss and cheddar grilled to the house roast beef sandwich to accompany your salad. Just don't forget the salad.

Serves You Right, 164 Princess St., 613-545-9626

Discussion Closed

Osprey Media

Disclaimer | Privacy | © 2008 

Newspapers:

Select a Publication:

wHuggle
Careers

Blogs
Wheels

Obituaries
Classifieds