



**Strength in Plants** *By Kate Murray*

# The Caesar of Caesar salads



SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE: KATE MURRAY

**C**AESAR SALAD can really be hit or miss when you go out to eat at a restaurant. There are so many variations that it's hard to really pinpoint what makes it perfect for a wide range of taste buds.

Kale Caesar, vegan Caesar, use the egg, don't use the egg, chop the romaine or serve the leaves whole; no matter what your preference, I can't help but compare all Caesar salad dressing to

my mother's version. While this may not be the most garlicky or the fishiest version you've ever tasted, the mild creamy flavor takes me back to that familiar taste that I consider the perfect Caesar dressing.

The crisp romaine, freshly ground black pepper and homemade croutons are among what makes this salad traditional, but it's that Reggiano Parmesan, the king of all cheeses, that re-

ally elevates the dressing to a delicacy. I can remember my dad dipping a piece of Italian bread right into the leftover dressing bowl more than 30 years ago; that was before making your own dressing at home gained popularity among the health-conscious.

Since I don't like my dressing overly pungent with a raw garlic taste, I use the fresh garlic to coat the bread crumbs

instead. Also, a little trick my mom taught me: Coddle the egg for about two minutes to kill off bacteria.

If you're feeling adventurous, add some grilled salmon to your Caesar.

## INGREDIENTS

1 large head of romaine lettuce  
3 or 4 slices French or Italian bread, slice into cubes about 1/2 inch thick  
1/4 cup olive oil plus 1 tablespoon for tossing with croutons  
1 garlic clove  
Salt and pepper to taste.  
1 tablespoon anchovy paste  
1 coddled egg  
Juice of half lemon  
1/2 cup freshly grated reggiano parmesan cheese  
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste.

## PREPARATION

Toss bread cubes together with minced garlic and 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add bread cubes to a sheet pan lined with parchment paper, salt and pepper to taste and bake at 350 degrees for about five minutes. Set aside to cool.

For best results, blend the dressing ingredients using an immersion blender.

The salad is ideally dressed just before serving. You can make the dressing a few hours ahead and keep it in the fridge until it's time to serve. Drizzle the dressing over the romaine and croutons, then toss together well. Sprinkle a little more Reggiano and freshly ground black pepper over the top if serving at a dinner party. ☺

*Kate Murray is certified in plant-based nutrition and the author of "A Silent Cure in My Back Yard." Find more recipes at: [asilentcure.org](http://asilentcure.org).*

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