

Caesar Salad

Caesar salad was invented on Fourth of July weekend in 1924 by Caesar Cardini, an Italian chef who owned a restaurant in Tijuana, Mexico. When the restaurant was overrun with American customers, and the kitchen became short on ingredients, he assembled what was left: lettuce stalks, olive oil, raw egg, croutons, parmesan cheese and Worcestershire sauce. The original Caesar salad recipe was intended as finger food and called for whole lettuce leaves, which were to be dipped in the dressing and then eaten with the fingers. But Cardini found he could make a great show of preparing the salad tableside in front of guests, and he could do this better with torn lettuce leaves rather than whole leaves.

People really liked the salad, and the dish became quite fashionable, especially with the Hollywood set. At the time, prohibition was in effect in the United States, but not in Mexico. So, people from nearby San Diego and Los Angeles made pilgrimages to visit restaurants where they could get good food and booze. Caesar's Restaurant became THE place to go to for good drinks and a famous salad.

Cardini's salad became so popular that it was soon being served in restaurants all over the world. Today, it is one of the most popular salads in America.

Ingredients

2 heads romaine lettuce inner leaves only
3 garlic cloves
2 eggs
1 loaf day old Italian bread
Extra virgin olive oil
1 lemon
Worcestershire sauce
¼ teaspoon plus a pinch salt
Black pepper to taste
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
Ice water

Cooking Utensils

Knife and cutting board
Mortar and pestle
Measuring cup
Measuring spoons
Baking sheet
Lemon reamer
Cookpot
Frying pan
Spatula
Cheese grater
Bowl
Slotted spoon
Large salad bowl
Salad tongs
Salad plates

Preheat oven to 350°. Place salad plates in the refrigerator so salad is served on cold plates. Cut the loaf of bread into ½” cubes and place on the baking sheet in a single layer. Put the baking sheet in the oven and bake until the bread cubes are dry, but not browned. Juice the lemon.

Place the peeled garlic, 4 tablespoons of olive oil, and ¼ teaspoon salt into the mortar and mash with the pestle. Strain the oil from the mashed garlic into the

frying pan. Set the frying pan on the stove over medium heat and add the dried croutons. Constantly stir and flip the croutons. Fry them until the oil is absorbed and they turn golden brown.

Place cold water and ice into a bowl and set aside. Bring 2 cups of water to boil in the cookpot on the stove and place the eggs into the boiling water. Cook for 1 minute. Remove the eggs from the cookpot and place them into the bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process. The dish can be prepared up to this point in advance.

Tear the romaine lettuce into a large salad bowl and toss with 3 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil. Sprinkle with the remaining salt and black pepper. Add the remaining olive oil and toss well. Add the lemon juice and the Worcestershire sauce. Break in the eggs and toss until a creamy dressing forms. Add the Parmesan cheese and toss well. Plate the salad on the cold salad plates and add the croutons.