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It's just too hot to heat up the kitchen. Tune up your knife skills and chop away--and, if you like, add some leftover rotisserie chicken--for a great hot day meal. – Chef Linda

Hot Weather Chopped Salad with Quick-Pickled Veggies (Serves 4)

Adapted from Chef Michael Nischan, The Dressing Room Restaurant

¼ c white balsamic vinegar
¼ c unseasoned rice vinegar
2 celery ribs, finely diced
1 medium carrot, finely diced
1 red bell pepper, finely diced
1 large firm peach, cut into ¼" dice
½ medium cucumber, peeled, seeded and cut into ¼" dice
1 c finely chopped frisée
1 c coarsely chopped arugula
1 c thinly sliced nappa cabbage
3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
2 oz small cubes ricotta salata or crumbled goat cheese
¼ c slivered almonds, toasted if desired
¾ c chopped leftover rotisserie chicken (optional)
1 large hard-cooked egg, sliced into 6 rounds
Smoked paprika, for sprinkling

1. In a saucepan combine the vinegars and bring to a boil. Put the celery and carrot in a heatproof bowl and pour over the vegetables. Let stand to cook to room temperature. Stir in the bell pepper and refrigerate until cold, about 20 minutes.
2. Drain off the vinegar from the vegetables, reserving 2 Tbsp and saving the rest for another recipe. Place the quick-pickled vegetables in a large salad bowl.
3. Add the peach, cucumber, frisée, arugula and cabbage.
4. Drizzle the salad with the olive oil and reserved vinegar; toss and season with salt and pepper to taste.
5. Lastly, add the cheese, almonds and optional chicken and toss gently. Garnish with the egg slices and a dash or two of smoked paprika.

Shopping List: peach, red bell pepper, cucumber, frisée, arugula, nappa cabbage, ricotta salata or goat cheese, (leftover) rotisserie chicken (optional)

Equipment Needed: Cutting board and knife, small saucepan, heatproof bowl, salad bowl, spoons, measuring cups and spoons

Pantry Staples: celery, carrot, white balsamic vinegar, unseasoned rice vinegar, smoked paprika, slivered almonds, egg, salt and pepper, extra-virgin olive oil