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Menu Trends: Salad Greens to Envy

Chefs who can look past mesclun mix find that heartier greens add dimension to their salads.

By Kate Leahy, Senior Associate Editor

Leafy Compromise



venison tataki salad uses either butter or little gem lettuces at the Silverado Resort (credit: Cervena Venison)

Greens of all kinds grace the menus at the [Silverado Resort](#) in Napa, Calif. “When you buy mesclun, it is very soft,” explains Peter Pahk, the property’s executive chef. “The hearty lettuces, they add to that mix to bulk it up and add some bitterness to an otherwise sweet mix of lettuces.”

Pahk has found compromise in little gem, a hybrid lettuce that’s a cross between Bibb and romaine. “It’s more bitter than either Bibb or romaine, and it’s hearty enough to braise,” he says. When he’s looking for a sturdier leaf as a variation in his tataki salad, in which grilled venison sits atop leaves seasoned with a Thai-style dressing, he swaps out butter lettuce for little gem.