



Green design

Leafy greens are the base for most salads, but where chefs go from there is up for grabs. Some are even leaving out the lettuce completely, opting for artfully arranged vegetables, fruits and other raw and cooked ingredients. While Caesars and cobb are still going strong, restaurants are trying to add a bit of excitement to the salad bowl to set their menus apart and appeal to salad eaters' more discriminating palates. Each of these chefs composes salads with an eye on its visual effect as well as its taste.



Spicy Thai Venison Salad

At his hip New York City restaurant Public, Chef Brad Farmerie focuses on foods and wines from down under. A favorite protein is farm-raised venison from New Zealand, a red meat usually associated with hearty winter fare. But here, Farmerie fashions a summery salad by grilling the venison and combining it with field greens, roasted garlic and a drizzle of lime-chili dressing. Grilled venison is a lean alternative to chicken and beef, the chef feels. "It provides lots of flavor without much fat."