

( SELF )

# NOURISH

## VEGGIE LOVE

→ *Healthy-eating chef Mikaela Reuben makes getting your greens easy (and beyond delicious).* BY SUZANNE D'AMATO

"I'm not really a salad person," Mikaela Reuben says. To anyone who's sampled a bright, crunchy bowl of greens whipped up by the Vancouver, British Columbia-based chef, that might come as a surprise. But what Reuben is referring to is the sad salad: iceberg lettuce, dressing on the side. "Salads have been pushed as something to eat to lose weight,"

she says, "but along with dieting comes a feeling of scarcity. I think about adding to your diet, not taking away—adding flavor, fiber, nutrients. I want people to crave my food." With her zesty dressings and unique, hearty ingredient combos, Reuben has done that and then some, creating salads that are unbelievably tasty and totally satisfying. (Trust: More than a

## (SELF) NOURISH

few SELF editors swear by her recipes!) Reuben's secrets include marinating veggies, adding fresh herbs and working in "little surprises" like shredded ginger. "I know how to make healthy food taste not *too* healthy," she says, laughing. The results are simple, yet special—just check out the dishes she's created here. Each is technically a salad, yes, but these are also have-it-your-way meals that work equally well solo or together, for weekday lunches, casual dinners, beach-day snacking or even breakfast (just put an egg on it!). It's the kind of versatility that Reuben personally likes in her diet, because her career keeps her constantly on the go. Already this year, she's been everywhere from Montreal to Cape Town to Tel Aviv. "I'll be home for eight days this month," she says. But she still finds the joy in the hustle—after all, this is a girl whose favorite Insta hashtag is #EatToLove. "I get to cook people wonderful meals and make them happy," she says. "I love humans—maybe even more than food!"



"It's about getting past the idea that vegetables are not filling or hard to incorporate," Reuben says. "I don't want that myself."



### Summer Lentil Salad

SERVES 3

- 1 cup uncooked green lentils
- 2½ tbsp Dijon mustard
- ¼ cup plus 1 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 3 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 5 tbsp finely chopped red onion
- 1 tsp dried coriander
- 2 medium heirloom tomatoes, sliced
- 1 cup English cucumber, cut into half moons
- 3 tbsp finely chopped mint, plus more for garnish
- 4 cups arugula

Prepare lentils according to package directions, drain and cool. In a bowl, mix mustard, ¼ cup olive oil, vinegar, pepper, salt, onion and coriander. Add lentils, tomatoes, cucumber and mint. Stir well. Divide arugula among 3 plates. Top each with a scoop of lentil mixture. Finish with a drizzle of olive oil and mint.

**NUTRITION INFO** 477 calories per serving, 24 g fat (3 g saturated), 46 g carbs, 22 g fiber, 19 g protein

### Marinated Cucumber Salad

SERVES 6

- 6 tbsp finely chopped kalamata olives
- ⅛ cup rice wine vinegar
- 5 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 tsp finely chopped garlic
- 1 tsp chile flakes
- ¼ cup finely chopped chives, plus more for garnish
- 5 tbsp finely chopped dill, plus more for garnish
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 5 cups sliced English cucumber
- 1 cup finely sliced radishes
- ½ cup finely sliced watermelon radishes

In a bowl, mix olives, vinegar, olive oil, pepper, garlic, chile flakes, chives, dill, onion powder, lemon juice and sea salt. Toss thoroughly with cucumbers and radishes. Marinate at least 10 minutes. Garnish with more herbs as desired and toss again before serving. Add vinegar, olives, lemon or salt to taste.

**NUTRITION INFO** 205 calories per serving, 13 g fat (2 g saturated), 20 g carbs, 3 g fiber, 4 g protein

## Mediterranean Cabbage Salad

### SERVES 3

- 4 cups finely chopped purple cabbage
- 2 cups baby spinach
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 tbsp capers
- 1 tsp chopped garlic
- 1 tbsp tamari
- 6 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp chopped sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper

In a bowl, mix cabbage, spinach and tomatoes. In a food processor, puree capers, garlic, tamari, olive oil, sun-dried tomato, lemon juice and pepper. Toss salad with dressing.

**NUTRITION INFO** 302 calories per serving, 28 g fat (4 g saturated), 14 g carbs, 4 g fiber, 4 g protein

## Pesto Quinoa

### SERVES 4

- 1 cup uncooked quinoa
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1½ cups packed basil leaves
- ⅓ cup plus 1 tbsp olive oil, divided
- ½ cup raw pine nuts
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp chopped garlic
- 1 cup finely chopped red onion
- 2½ cups finely chopped yellow squash
- 1 tbsp tamari
- 1 tsp ground black pepper

Prepare quinoa according to package directions, fluff gently with a fork and cool. In a food processor, blend lemon juice, basil, ⅓ cup olive oil, pine nuts, sea salt and garlic until smooth. In a medium sauté pan over medium heat, warm remaining 1 tbsp olive oil. Add onion and sauté 7 minutes or until translucent. Add squash, tamari and pepper, and sauté 5 minutes more. Remove from heat and add quinoa, stirring well. Mix in pesto to taste. Serve warm or cold.

**NUTRITION INFO** 495 calories per serving, 36 g fat (4 g saturated), 37 g carbs, 5 g fiber, 11 g protein

### QUICK TIP

Stock your fridge as a salad bar, with everything already washed and cut up. "It makes it easy to eat well," Reuben says.

