

Kale Salad

¼ bunch Kale, chopped and stems removed
2 tbsp grated Parmesan
2 tbsp dried cranberries
1 tbsp shaved almonds
Juice of 1 lemon
½ cup olive oil

Kale and I are not friends. It's hard to cook with. It's tough. It's bitter. It's not all that pleasant. So, when the kale came in this year, I had to call in the cavalry.

My dear friend, former coworker, and the Sous that trained me when I was still in restaurants, Kait, loves kale. She loves it in all forms. She'll snack on it raw, the weirdo. So, I called her looking for inspiration, and she reminded me of a trick we used to do in the restaurant. We would make a simple vinaigrette of half lemon juice and half olive oil and use it on everything that needed a little boost. She suggested I try massaging the kale with the lemon oil and go from there. Being a big fan of the parm/dried fruit/almond combination, I decided to give it a try.

It's spectacular. The kale softens a little and turns a vibrant green. The acid and fat soften kale's harsh temper. The dried cranberries and almonds are a classic combination that never fails to delight. And the cheese, well, the cheese is cheese, so of course it's delicious.

This is probably the only time I'll say it's okay to use the pre-shredded cheese. I like the bigger shreds of parmesan for this salad, and it's hard to get the cheese to do that on a box grater.

Make sure your kale is washed. While waiting for it to dry, put the lemon juice and oil in a jar and shake like crazy. This dressing won't want to stay emulsified for very long, so use quickly, or just re-shake it if it needs it. It also makes way more dressing than you need, so keep it in the fridge for a few days. I like it on fried pork chops and grilled fish.

Once your kale is dry, put all the pieces in a large bowl and drizzle on a few tablespoons of the lemon oil dressing. Massage the mix into the leaves. The kale will turn a little translucent and start to soften. You can leave the leaves (ha!) to marinate for a few hours, or even overnight. Taste a leaf and add enough salt to make it taste good. I just needed a pinch. Keep in mind that the cheese is salty, and the nuts and cherries usually have some salt on them, so you might not want any extra salt in the dressing.



When you're ready to eat, add in all the other goodies, and mix to combine. Serve at once, sprinkling more goodies on top if you want it to look for Instagram.