

Quick & Easy Microwave Warmed Spinach & Pear Salad



Tips:

1. Warming brings out the full flavor of the pear in this salad and only slightly softens the spinach leaves. Using a microwave oven makes warming very quick and easy.
2. **Spinach** grows in sandy soil, and **spinach leaves** usually retain some of the gritty sand

when harvested. I therefore recommend rinsing the **spinach** rigorously with cold water in a colander or strainer as shown in step 1 even if the **spinach** is packaged with a label says that the **spinach leaves** have been rinsed and are ready to use.

Preparation Time: 5-10 minutes

Ingredients

(for 1)

1 Handful Fresh Spinach

1/2 Pear

Salad Dressing

Walnuts (I'm using raw walnuts, but you can substitute with any walnuts or your favorite nuts. Of course, skip the nuts if you or anyone eating the salad has a nut allergy.)

Feta (or your favorite) **Cheese**

Dried Apricots (or any dried fruit)

Ground Black Pepper (optional)



Equipment

Microwave Oven

Microwave Safe Bowl

Sharp Paring Knife

Cutting Board

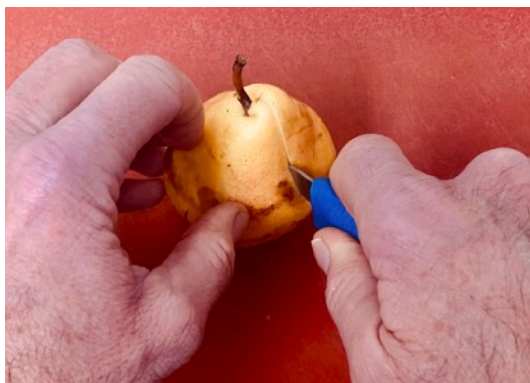
Colander or Strainer



1. Give a **pear** a good hand scrubbing rinse under cold running water.



Cut the **pear** in half lengthwise, and cut one of the **pear halves** in half again.



Carefully remove the **core** from the **2 pear quarters**.

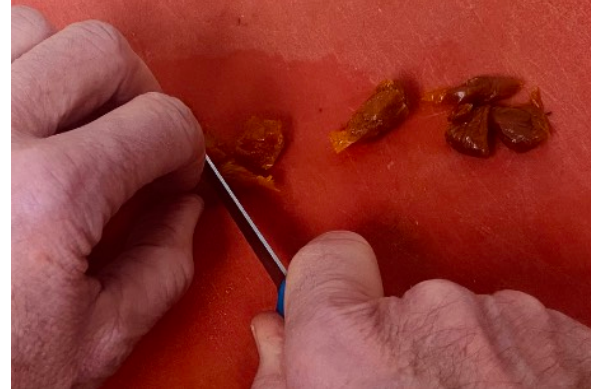
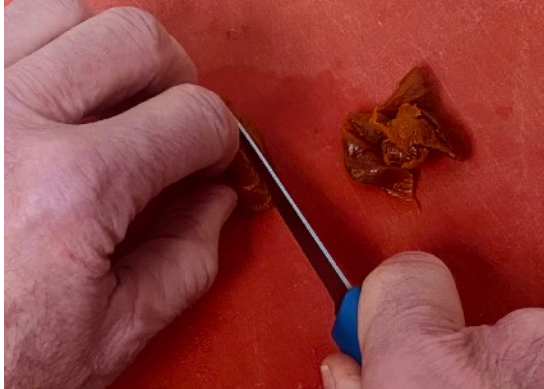


Cut **each pear quarter** lengthwise into 2-3 slices $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (1.5 - 2 cm) wide and then cut the **pear slices** cross-sectionally into bite sized pieces $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (1.5 - 2 cm) wide.



2. If you're not using **dried fruit** that needs to be cut, skip to step 3. Otherwise, if you're using **larger pieces of dried fruit**, like the **dried apricots** you see below, cut the **dried**

fruit in narrow strips about 1/4 inch (.6 cm) wide and then cut those strips in cross section into pieces also about 1/4 inch (.6 cm) wide.



Put **1 handful of fresh spinach** in a colander or strainer, rinse it well under cold running water and hand squeeze it dry.



3. Put the **washed spinach** in a microwave-safe bowl and add the **chopped pear**.



4. Put the bowl in the middle of the microwave oven, and cook using HIGH heat or 100% power for 1 minute. **NOTE:** Cooking time will vary depending on the watt power of your microwave oven. I used a 1200-watt microwave oven and cooked the **spinach and pear salad** you see here for 1 minute. If your microwave oven has less watt power, start cooking for 1 minute, check the **salad** for doneness as shown below and continue warming in the microwave oven if needed. If your microwave oven has more watt power, start cooking for 30 seconds, check for

doneness and add more time if needed.)



5. After cooking, **CAREFULLY** remove the bowl from the microwave oven. The **warmed spinach and pear** is cooked to doneness when the **spinach leaves** have just started to wilt, as shown here.



If your **spinach leaves** have not yet started to wilt, keep warming them in the microwave oven at 30 second intervals until they look as shown above.

6. Finish by adding your choice or a combination of the following to your taste: **salad dressing, crumbled feta (or any) cheese,...**



...chopped walnuts (or any nuts), dried fruit and a good crunch of ground black pepper.



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