

Vinaigrettes Around the World

Key Terms

Aromatics: combinations of intensely flavored seasonings such as fresh or dried herbs, spices, chilies, garlic and ginger used to add flavor. The use of aromatics can develop the personality of a dish and take it from good to great.

Emulsifier: a substance that keeps two ingredients from separating. Emulsifiers are used where ingredients would normally separate after mixing. For example, oil and vinegar separate after mixing or shaking. Adding an emulsifier attracts and binds the two ingredients together. These emulsifiers allow for the creation of vinaigrettes that are creamy and won't separate. For the vinaigrette to stay together the ratio of ingredients and order in which the ingredients are mixed is critical.

Vinaigrette Ratio

1 part emulsifier (optional)
1 part acid
2 – 3 parts oil

Classic Vinaigrette Technique

1 tablespoon Dijon mustard, optional
1 tablespoon vinegar (white wine, red wine, sherry, balsamic, etc)
Aromatics (garlic, shallots, herbs, etc), optional and to taste
salt, pepper and sugar
3 tablespoons oil, more or less to taste (vegetable, olive oil or combination)

1. Whisk the Dijon mustard if using, vinegar, aromatics, salt, pepper and sugar together in a large bowl.
2. Slowly whisk in the oil.
3. Taste and adjust seasonings to taste.

Latin Vinaigrette: Sour cream, lime juice, chilies, canola oil

French Vinaigrette: Dijon mustard, red wine vinegar, shallots, olive oil

Balsamic Vinaigrette: Balsamic vinegar, fresh or dried basil, olive oil (omit the sugar)

Asian Vinaigrette: Combination of rice vinegar and soy sauce, ginger and garlic, vegetable oil and a dash of sesame oil.

Beyond the Greens: Uses for Vinaigrettes

- As a marinade to add flavor and/or tenderize chicken or meat. Discard marinade after using.
- As a sauce for a sandwich.
- As a dip for vegetables and fruits.
- As a dressing for pasta, grain or bean based salads.
- As a sauce for cooked meats, chicken and vegetables.