



Gratz Insider, Summer 2017 - Story Continuation

[To return to the newsletter, close this page.]

The Gratz Gourmet

Elizabeth Christy is a student in the Gratz College [Master of Science in Nonprofit Management](#) program, and is the daughter of Dodi Klimoff, executive assistant to the interim president at Gratz. Christy is also program coordinator at the nonprofit [Eco Urban Gardens](#) in Los Angeles. The organization's mission is to teach people, especially those living in urban areas, how to grow their own organic gardens, thereby benefiting the environment and making healthy food more broadly accessible.

Eco Urban Gardens has programs for homeowners, restaurants and public spaces. In addition, one of its principal initiatives is its farm-to-school program. Through this program, the organization works with local schools, teaching students everything from designing, building and cultivating school gardens to harvesting the crops and using them to prepare meals.

"The idea," says Christy, "is to teach young people that they don't have to spend a lot of money to live a healthy life style."

As part of the farm-to-school program, Eco Urban Gardens publishes monthly newsletters that sometimes include recipes for healthy eating. The recipe below was provided by Christy's colleague, Veronica Mercado, program development assistant at Eco Urban Gardens and student in holistic nutrition. Mercado chose to feature this recipe because it promotes cardiac health, which is particularly important to her family with its history of cardiac disease.

Spicy Strawberry Avocado Salad*

- 2 cups spinach
(anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, promotes vision, supports bone health)
- 1 avocado, sliced
(promotes heart health, blood sugar regulation, anti-cancer benefits)
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced
(promotes heart health, blood sugar balance, healthy aging)
- 6 tablespoons pumpkin seeds
(antioxidant support, blood sugar balance, antimicrobial)
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne**
(helps prevent blood clots and provides digestive system and detox support)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
(anti-inflammatory, heart health, digestive system benefits, reduces risk of cancer)

2 teaspoons honey

(anti-bacterial, anti-oxidant, promotes heart health, reduces cough irritation)

1 teaspoon lemon juice

(antioxidant, promotes heart health)

1. Whisk olive oil, honey and lemon juice together for dressing.
2. Mix pumpkin seeds and cayenne into dressing.
3. Place spinach in large bowl and top with avocado and strawberry slices.
4. Pour dressing onto salad, toss and enjoy.

*For the gardeners among our readers, Christy says that spinach and strawberries should be planted in partial shade, requiring about six hours of sunlight a day. From her urban gardening perspective, she adds that these plants also do well in a pot or small window box.

**For those who don't like spicy food, substitute turmeric for cayenne.