

Grow Your Own Salad in a Pot

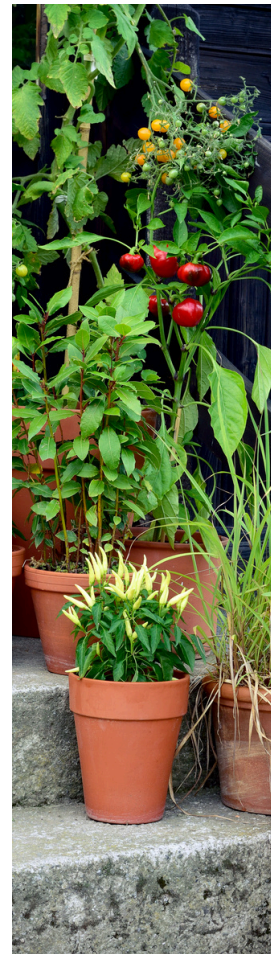
For People Who Love Salad But Not Mud
Under Their Nails



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Introduction

REMEMBER THAT FEELING? YOU'RE SITTING AT A CAFÉ, MAYBE DOWN BY THE VIADUCT SOAKING UP SOME HARBOUR SUN OR TUCKED AWAY IN A COZY PONSONBY SPOT, TUCKING INTO A SALAD THAT TASTES... WELL, 'ALIVE'. CRISP, PEPPERY ROCKET, BUTTERY SOFT LETTUCE LEAVES, MAYBE A SPRINKLE OF FRESH CHIVES SNIPPED STRAIGHT FROM THE POT. THAT INCREDIBLE BURST OF FLAVOUR THAT JUST 'DOESN'T' COME FROM A PLASTIC BAG THAT'S BEEN SITTING IN THE SUPERMARKET CHILLER FOR A WEEK.

THAT'S THE MAGIC OF 'PROPER FRESH'. AND HERE'S THE BEST BIT: YOU DON'T NEED A QUARTER-ACRE DREAM SECTION OUT IN TITIRANGI, OR EVEN A DEDICATED VEGE PATCH, TO TASTE IT EVERY SINGLE DAY. SERIOUSLY. FORGET WRESTLING WITH HEAVY CLAY OR ENDLESS WEEDING UNDER THE MIDDAY SUMMER SUN (THOUGH ABSOLUTE RESPECT IF THAT'S YOUR JAM!).



SALAD WITHOUT SOIL UNDER YOUR NAILS



THIS GUIDE IS ALL ABOUT GROWING YOUR OWN DELICIOUS, VIBRANT SALAD GREENS ‘RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE, EASY AS’. STUCK IN A CITY APARTMENT WITH JUST A SUNNY WINDOWSILL? GOT A TINY BALCONY SQUEEZED BETWEEN THE BBQ AND THE CHILLY BIN? RENTING A PLACE WHERE DIGGING UP THE LAWN IS DEFINITELY ‘NOT ON THE TENANCY AGREEMENT’? SWEET AS, NO WORRIES! WE HAVE YOU COVERED!

WE’RE TALKING ‘POTS’. SIMPLE, FORGIVING, UTTERLY BRILLIANT POTS. UPCYCLE AN OLD BUCKET (GIVE IT A GOOD SCRUB!), GRAB A CHEAP PLANTER FROM BUNNINGS OR YOUR LOCAL GARDEN CENTRE, OR EVEN REPURPOSE THAT QUIRKY WOODEN CRATE OR DRAWER YOU FOUND AT THE TAKAPUNA MARKETS. IT’S ABOUT GETTING THAT INCREDIBLE FRESHNESS, THE QUIET SATISFACTION OF GROWING SOMETHING YOURSELF (“I MADE THIS!”), AND YES, A SERIOUSLY TASTY SALAD – ALL WITHOUT NEEDING TO GET PROPER SOIL UNDER YOUR NAILS (UNLESS YOU FANCY IT, OF COURSE!).

THINK OF IT AS YOUR SHORTCUT TO CAFÉ-QUALITY GREENS, GROWN WITH KIWI INGENUITY AND A RELAXED ATTITUDE. LESS HASSLE, MORE HARVEST. SO, PUT THE KETTLE ON, REST YOUR FEET UP FOR A MOMENT, AND LET’S GET GROWING. YOUR TASTE BUDS (AND MAYBE YOUR WALLET) WILL BE STOKED.

READY? LET’S GET STARTED.

01

WHY GROW SALAD IN POTS? THE NO-FUSS, NO-FUSS KIWI WAY

OKAY, SO WHY POTS? WHY NOT JUST THROW SOME SEEDS IN THE GROUND? WELL, IF YOU'VE GOT THE SPACE AND THE SOIL, GO FOR IT! BUT FOR MOST OF US – ESPECIALLY HERE IN NEW ZEALAND WHERE SECTIONS CAN BE COMPACT AND RENTALS ARE COMMON – POTS AREN'T JUST 'AN' OPTION, THEY'RE OFTEN THE 'BEST' OPTION.

HERE'S WHY:

1. SPACE? YEAH, NAH, NO PROBLEM.

AUCKLAND APARTMENTS, WE SEE YOU: GOT A SUNNY WINDOWSILL? A WEE BALCONY? A CONCRETE STEP OUT THE BACK? THAT'S ALL YOU NEED. POTS TURN DEAD SPACE INTO DELICIOUS SPACE. PERFECT FOR SQUEEZING LIFE INTO SHOEBOX COURTYARDS OR MAKING THE MOST OF A RENTED DECK.

PORTABLE FEASTS: LIVE IN A FLAT? MOVING HOUSE SOON? POTS ARE YOUR MATES. PICK 'EM UP AND SHIFT THEM TO CATCH THE SUN, DODGE THAT SUDDEN SOUTHERLY SQUALL, OR TAKE THEM WITH YOU WHEN YOU GO. TRY DOING 'THAT' WITH A GARDEN BED!

2. SWEET AS SIMPLICITY (WAY EASIER THAN YOU THINK).

SKIP THE HARD WORK. NO DIGGING, NO DOUBLE-DIGGING, NO WRESTLING WITH WEEDS THAT SEEM TO GROW FASTER THAN YOUR ACTUAL SALAD. FILL THE POT. PLANT SEEDS/SEEDLINGS. WATER. DONE. IT'S GARDENING STRIPPED BACK TO FASTER FEEDS: THAT BLACK PLASTIC WARMTH IS QUICKER THAN THE GROUND IN SPRING. SEEDS GERMINATE FASTER, SEEDLINGS GROW QUICKER. YOU'LL BE SNIPPING YOUR FIRST LEAVES WEEKS SOONER THAN IF YOU'D WAITED FOR THE GARDEN SOIL TO WARM UP PROPERLY. QUICK WINS!

CONTROL FREAK'S DREAM: HEAVY CLAY OUT WEST? SANDY SOIL UP NORTH? DOESN'T MATTER ONE BIT. YOU CONTROL THE SOIL IN THE POT – NICE, LIGHT, FREE-DRAINING MIX PERFECT FOR SALAD GREENS. YOU CONTROL THE WATER. YOU CONTROL THE SUN BY MOVING IT. TOTAL BOSS MOVE.

3. BETTER ON THE BUDGET, TOO.

CHEAPER THAN COUNTDOWN (ESPECIALLY FOR THE GOOD STUFF): THOSE BAGS OF FANCY MESCLUN OR ORGANIC ROCKET ADD UP. A PACKET OF SEEDS COSTS PEANUTS AND GIVES YOU HARVESTS FOR MONTHS. EVEN BUYING A PUNNET OF SEEDLINGS GIVES YOU WAY MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK THAN A SINGLE BAG OF LEAVES.

UPCYCLE CHAMPION: POTS DON'T NEED TO BE FANCY. OLD ICE CREAM CONTAINERS (POKE HOLES!), STURDY BUCKETS, WOODEN CRATES, EVEN THOSE BIG PLASTIC STORAGE TUBS (THE WAREHOUSE SPECIAL!) – GET CREATIVE! SAVE YOUR DOLLARS FOR THE GOOD POTTING MIX AND SEEDS.

4. LESS HASSLE, MORE HAPPY.

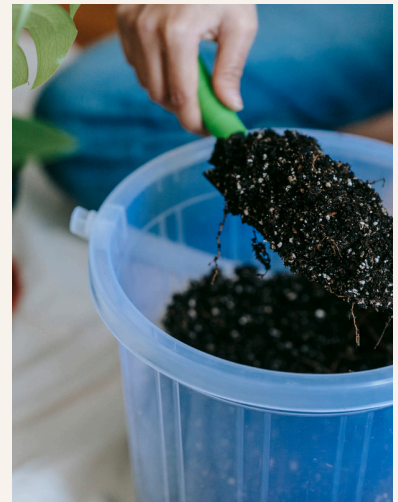
WEED WARFARE? MINIMAL. BECAUSE YOU'RE USING FRESH POTTING MIX, WEEDS ARE WAY LESS LIKELY TO INVADE YOUR POT PARADISE THAN YOUR GARDEN BED. MORE TIME ENJOYING, LESS TIME PLUCKING.

PEST PATROL EASIER: SPOT A SLUG MAKING A BEELINE FOR YOUR BUTTER LETTUCE? EASIER TO SPOT 'EM AND FLICK 'EM WHEN YOUR GREENS ARE UP ON A BENCH OR BALCONY. PLUS, YOU CAN JUST SHIFT THE POT AWAY FROM TROUBLE.



THE “I CAN ACTUALLY DO THIS” FACTOR: POTS MAKE SUCCESS FEEL ACHIEVABLE. YOU SEE RESULTS QUICKLY. IT FEELS MANAGEABLE. PERFECT FOR BEGINNERS, BUSY FOLKS, OR ANYONE WHO JUST WANTS FRESH SALAD WITHOUT TURNING IT INTO A MAJOR PROJECT.

BASICALLY, POTS ARE THE ULTIMATE LOW-COMMITMENT, HIGH-REWARD WAY TO GROW YOUR OWN FOOD. THEY FIT THE KIWI LIFESTYLE – ADAPTABLE, PRACTICAL, AND DEAD EASY. IF YOU CAN KEEP A POT PLANT ALIVE (MOSTLY!), YOU CAN GROW SALAD. PROMISE.



02 WHAT YOU'LL NEED (KEEP IT SIMPLE, EH?)

WHAT DO YOU NEED?. THE BEST THING ABOUT POT GARDENING? YOU DON'T NEED A FANCY SHED FULL OF TOOLS OR A TRIP TO THE GARDEN CENTRE THAT COSTS MORE THAN YOUR WEEKLY SHOP. WE'RE KEEPING IT LEAN, MEAN, AND GREEN. HERE'S THE ABSOLUTE ESSENTIALS:



1. THE CONTAINER: YOUR SALAD'S NEW BACH (KEEP IT CASUAL!)

FORGET FANCY (UNLESS YOU WANT TO): YOU ABSOLUTELY 'DO NOT' NEED EXPENSIVE CERAMIC POTS (THOUGH THEY DO LOOK NICE!). EMBRACE THE KIWI ART OF UPCYCLING!

WHAT WORKS A TREAT:

- * OLD BUCKETS: THE CLASSIC. GIVE IT A SCRUB, DRILL HOLES – BOOM, PERFECT. (THINK: PAINT BUCKETS, OLD COMPOST BUCKETS).
- * PLASTIC STORAGE TUBS: THE WAREHOUSE SPECIAL! CHOOSE STURDY ONES, *NOT* THE SUPER FLIMSY ONES. DEPTH IS KEY (SEE BELOW).
- * STYROFOAM BOXES: THE ONES FISH COME IN? GOLD! (GIVE THEM A *VERY* GOOD CLEAN). GREAT DEPTH FOR ROOTS.
- * WOODEN CRATES/DRAWERS: FOUND ONE AT THE TAKAPUNA MARKETS? LINE IT WITH SOME WEED MAT OR OLD FABRIC FIRST TO STOP SOIL FALLING OUT. ADDS CHARACTER!
- * ACTUAL GARDEN POTS: SURE, IF YOU HAVE THEM OR SEE A CHEAP ONE AT BUNNINGS/MITRE 10. PLASTIC IS LIGHT AND PRACTICAL.
- * EVEN... COLANDERS? YEP, IF THEY'RE STURDY! NATURALLY HOLEY. GREAT FOR HERBS MIXED IN.
- * THE GOLDEN RULE: DRAINAGE HOLES! THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE, MATE. SALAD GREENS HATE WET FEET (SOGGY ROOTS = SAD, DEAD PLANTS). IF YOUR CHOSEN CONTAINER DOESN'T HAVE HOLES IN THE BOTTOM...
- * GRAB A DRILL: MAKE 5-10 DECENT-SIZED HOLES (ABOUT 5MM OR PENCIL-WIDTH). EASY AS.
- * NO DRILL? GET CREATIVE: HEAT A NAIL OR SCREWDRIVER (CAREFULLY!) AND POKE HOLES. OR USE A HAMMER AND NAIL (WORKS ON THINNER PLASTIC).
- * SIZE MATTERS (A BIT):



*** SIZE MATTERS (A BIT):**

*** DEPTH:** AIM FOR AT LEAST 15-20CM DEEP FOR MOST SALAD GREENS. LETTUCE, ROCKET, SPINACH – THEY NEED ROOM FOR THEIR ROOTS TO STRETCH OUT, LIKE A GOOD COMFY JANDAL. HERBS LIKE CHIVES OR PARSLEY CAN GET AWAY WITH A BIT LESS (10-15CM).

*** WIDTH:** THE WIDER THE POT, THE MORE PLANTS YOU CAN FIT! A STANDARD BUCKET (ABOUT 25-30CM WIDE) IS BRILLIANT. A LONG PLANTER BOX IS AWESOME FOR A SALAD MIX.

*** ONE LAST THING:** IF USING SOMETHING ***REALLY*** DEEP (LIKE A BIG STORAGE TUB), YOU DON'T NEED TO FILL IT ***ALL*** THE WAY WITH EXPENSIVE MIX. PUT SOME BROKEN UP POLYSTYRENE, GRAVEL, OR EVEN OLD PLASTIC BOTTLES IN THE BOTTOM THIRD FIRST. SAVES MIX, IMPROVES DRAINAGE!

2. THE SOIL: DON'T SKIMP HERE.

*** POTTING MIX IS YOUR BEST MATE:** THIS IS THE ONE THING WORTH SPENDING A FEW EXTRA DOLLARS ON. WHY? GARDEN SOIL OR DIRT FROM THE SECTION IS USUALLY TOO HEAVY, COMPACTS IN POTS, AND DOESN'T DRAIN. POTTING MIX IS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO BE LIGHT, FLUFFY, HOLD MOISTURE ***BUT*** DRAIN WELL, AND HAVE AIR POCKETS FOR ROOTS. CRUCIAL!

*** LOOK FOR A BASIC, GOOD QUALITY 'POTTING MIX' (NOT "GARDEN SOIL" OR "TOPSOIL")** FROM BUNNINGS, MITRE 10, OR YOUR LOCAL GARDEN CENTRE. A 25L BAG WILL HOLD SEVERAL POTS.

*** COMPOST: THE SECRET SPRINKLE (OPTIONAL TURBO BOOST):** THINK OF COMPOST (OR WORM CASTINGS – MAGIC STUFF!) LIKE A VITAMIN BOOST. IT'S NOT THE MAIN MEAL (POTTING MIX IS!), BUT MIXING IN 'A HANDFUL OR TWO PER POT' GIVES YOUR PLANTS EXTRA NUTRIENTS TO GROW LUSH AND TASTY. GOT A HOME COMPOST BIN? PERFECT! OTHERWISE, GRAB A SMALL BAG.

*** THE SIMPLE RECIPE:** FILL YOUR POT ABOUT 3/4 FULL WITH 'POTTING MIX'. MIX IN 'A GOOD HANDFUL OF COMPOST OR WORM CASTINGS'. GIVE IT A GENTLE MIX. DONE! DON'T OVERCOMPLICATE IT.



• 3. THE SEEDS OR SEEDLINGS: PICK YOUR GREENS!

* THE EASY-AS SALAD ALL-STARS (PERFECT FOR POTS & BEGINNERS): STICK TO THESE RELIABLE PERFORMERS TO START:

* LETTUCE: SO MANY TYPES! LOOSE-LEAF VARIETIES (LIKE 'SALAD BOWL', 'OAKLEAF', 'LOLLO ROSSA') ARE BEST – YOU CAN KEEP SNIPPING LEAVES. AVOID GIANT ICEBERGS FOR POTS.

* ROCKET/ARUGULA: PEPPERY PUNCH! GROWS FAST FROM SEED. LOVES A POT.

* SPINACH (BABY LEAF): PICK YOUNG LEAVES FOR SALADS. GROWS WELL IN COOLER SPOTS TOO.

* MESCLUN MIXES: THESE ARE PRE-MIXED PACKETS OF DIFFERENT LETTUCE, ROCKET, MUSTARD, ENDIVE ETC. SEEDS. FANTASTIC VALUE, FUN VARIETY, AND YOU GET A PROPER CAFE-STYLE SALAD MIX FROM ONE SOWING! 'TURBO'S TOP PICK FOR INSTANT SATISFACTION.'

* HERBS (THE SALAD ENHANCERS): CHIVES (SNIP THE GREEN STEMS), PARSLEY (FLAT-LEAF IS FLAVOURFUL), BASIL (NEEDS WARMTH/SUN, BUY SEEDLINGS!), CORIANDER (CAN BE FUSSY, TRY SEEDS OR SEEDLINGS).

* WHERE TO BUY:

* SEEDS: SUPERMARKETS (CHECK DATES!), BUNNINGS, MITRE 10, KINGS SEEDS, EGMONT SEEDS, OR YOUR LOCAL GARDEN CENTRE. LOOK FOR VARIETIES MARKED "BABY LEAF," "CUT-AND-COME-AGAIN," OR "SUITABLE FOR CONTAINERS."

* SEEDLINGS (PUNNETS): GARDEN CENTRES, BUNNINGS, MITRE 10, EVEN SOME SUPERMARKETS. LOOK FOR HEALTHY-LOOKING LITTLE PLANTS (NOT YELLOW OR WILTED). ROCKET, LETTUCE, SPINACH, AND HERB PUNNETS ARE COMMON. 'PERFECT IF YOU WANT GREENS FAST!'



'THE BARE BONES RECAP:'

IF YOU ONLY GRAB THREE THINGS TOMORROW, MAKE IT:

1. 'A CONTAINER' (BUCKET + DRILL = SORTED)
 2. 'A BAG OF POTTING MIX'
 3. 'A PACKET OF MESCLUN SEEDS OR A PUNNET OF LETTUCE/ROCKET SEEDLINGS'
- THAT'S GENUINELY ALL YOU 'NEED' TO GET STARTED ON YOUR POTTED SALAD ADVENTURE. SIMPLE AS. NEXT UP: GETTING THOSE SEEDS OR SEEDLINGS INTO THE DIRT! (DON'T WORRY, IT'S EASIER THAN ASSEMBLING FLAT-PACK FURNITURE).

COMMON MISTAKES (AND HOW TO LAUGH THROUGH THEM)

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GARDENING, EVEN THE EASY-PEASY POT KIND, ISN'T ALWAYS SMOOTH SAILING. STUFF HAPPENS! PLANTS CAN BE FUSSY DIVAS SOMETIMES, OR LIFE GETS BUSY, OR THAT AUCKLAND WEATHER DOES ITS UNPREDICTABLE THING. THE KEY? DON'T STRESS! EVERY MISTAKE IS JUST A LESSON WEARING A BIT OF DIRT. HERE'S THE COMMON HICCUPS AND HOW TO BOUNCE BACK, EASY AS:

1. THE GREAT DROWNING

(OVERWATERING)

* 'THE CRIME:' LOVING YOUR PLANTS A BIT 'TOO' MUCH WITH THE WATERING CAN. SOGGY SOIL, YELLOWING LEAVES, LIMP STEMS, MAYBE EVEN A WHIFF OF SOMETHING FUNKY. ROOTS NEED AIR TOO!

* 'THE FIX: 'FINGER TEST IS YOUR LIFESAVER!' STICK IT IN – IF DAMP, 'WALK AWAY. ONLY WATER WHEN DRY KNUCKLE-DEEP. ENSURE THOSE DRAINAGE HOLES AREN'T BLOCKED. IF IT'S A SWAMP, GENTLY TIP THE POT SIDWAYS TO DRAIN EXCESS WATER, AND MAYBE EASE UP FOR A WEEK. PLANTS ARE TOUGHER THAN THEY LOOK.

* 'LAUGH IT OFF:' "OOPS, GAVE IT THE POOL TREATMENT! TAKING A WATERING CAN ON HOLIDAY NOW."



2. THE PALE & LEGGY LOOK (NOT ENOUGH SUN)

* THE CRIME: YOUR ROCKET'S STRETCHING LIKE IT'S TRYING TO ESCAPE THE POT, LEAVES ARE SMALL AND PALE GREEN (OR EVEN YELLOW). IT'S DESPERATE FOR MORE RAYS!

* THE FIX: 'FOLLOW THE SUN!' MOVE THAT POT TO A BRIGHTER SPOT – A SUNNIER WINDOWSILL, A DIFFERENT PART OF THE BALCONY. AIM FOR AT LEAST 4 GOOD HOURS. IF YOU'RE TRULY SUN-STARVED, STICK TO SPINACH OR LOOSE-LEAF LETTUCE; THEY'RE MORE SHADE-TOLERANT THAN SUN-WORSHIPPERS LIKE ROCKET.

* 'LAUGH IT OFF: "THOUGHT I WAS GROWING SALAD, TURNS OUT IT'S AUDITIONING FOR A ROLE IN 'JACK AND THE BEANSTALK'!"

3. **THE WINTER WARRIOR FAIL** (WRONG PLANT, WRONG TIME)

* **THE CRIME:** TRYING TO GROW CAPSICUMS, TOMATOES, OR BASIL IN THE MIDDLE OF A CHILLY AUCKLAND WINTER. THEY'LL JUST SIT THERE SHIVERING, LOOKING MISERABLE, OR KEEL OVER.

* **THE FIX:** 'STICK TO THE SEASON!' SALAD GREENS (LETTUCE, ROCKET, SPINACH, MESCLUN) AND HERBS LIKE PARSLEY, CORIANDER, AND CHIVES ARE 'COOL-SEASON CHAMPS'. THEY THRIVE IN AUTUMN, WINTER, AND SPRING. SAVE THE SUMMER SUN-LOVERS FOR, WELL, SUMMER! CHECK SEED PACKETS OR SEEDLING LABELS FOR PLANTING TIMES.

* **LAUGH IT OFF:** "MY CAPSICUM THOUGHT IT WAS MOVING TO THE GOLD COAST. AUCKLAND WINTER HAD OTHER IDEAS!" (THEN GRAB A MESCLUN SEED PACKET!)

4. **THE JUNGLE JAM** (OVERCROWDING)

* **THE CRIME:** GOT OVEREXCITED WITH THE SEED PACKET AND SPRINKLED LIKE IT WAS FAIRY DUST. NOW YOU HAVE A DENSE FOREST OF TINY, STRUGGLING SEEDLINGS FIGHTING FOR LIGHT AND FOOD.

* **THE FIX:** 'BE BRAVE, THIN THEM OUT!' USE SMALL SCISSORS TO SNIP OFF THE WEAKEST SEEDLINGS AT SOIL LEVEL, LEAVING THE STRONGEST ONES SPACED PROPERLY (5-10CM FOR CUT-AND-COME-AGAIN, MORE FOR HEADING LETTUCES). IT FEELS RUTHLESS, BUT THE REMAINING PLANTS WILL THANK YOU WITH BIG, JUICY LEAVES. BONUS: THOSE THINNINGS ARE TASTY MICROGREENS!

* **LAUGH IT OFF:** "WANTED A SALAD BAR, ENDED UP WITH A SEEDLING MOSH PIT! TIME FOR SOME CROWD CONTROL."

5. **THE FORGETFUL FARMER** (UNDERWATERING/NEGLECT)

* **THE CRIME:** LIFE GOT BUSY (WORK, KIDS, THAT EPIC SURF SESSION). CAME BACK TO FIND YOUR POT DRIER THAN A CANTERBURY NOR'WESTER, LEAVES WILTING SADLY.

* **THE FIX:** 'GIVE IT A GOOD, DEEP SOAK ASAP!' OFTEN, THEY'LL PERK UP SURPRISINGLY WELL. TRY MAKING A QUICK "POT CHECK" PART OF YOUR ROUTINE – MORNING COFFEE, AFTER WORK, WHENEVER SUITS. GROUP POTS TOGETHER SO THEY'RE EASIER TO SPOT.

* **LAUGH IT OFF:** "MY SALAD DECIDED TO GO ON A HUNGER STRIKE! NEGOTIATIONS (WITH THE WATERING CAN) ARE UNDERWAY."

Remember: Every gardener, even the pros, kills a plant now and then. It's not failure, it's feedback! Learn the lesson, chuckle, grab another seed or seedling, and try again. Your pot won't hold a grudge.

04

HARVEST TIME! - SNIP & SIP!

THIS IS IT! THE MOMENT YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR – TURNING YOUR LITTLE POTTED PARADISE INTO ACTUAL, DELICIOUS FOOD. HARVESTING IS SIMPLE, SATISFYING, AND THE KEY TO KEEPING YOUR PLANTS PRODUCING FOR WEEKS OR EVEN MONTHS. GET THOSE SCISSORS READY

WHEN TO SNIP:

- * THE "CUT-AND-COME-AGAIN" MAGIC: THIS IS THE SECRET SAUCE FOR POTTED SALADS! DON'T PULL THE WHOLE PLANT. INSTEAD, 'SNIP OFF THE OUTER, OLDER LEAVES' WHEN THEY'RE A GOOD SIZE (USUALLY 5-10CM LONG, DEPENDING ON THE VARIETY). LEAVE THE SMALL INNER LEAVES AND THE GROWING POINT (THE CENTRE) UNTOUCHED.
- * 'HOW IT WORKS: THE PLANT KEEPS GROWING NEW LEAVES FROM THE CENTRE. SNIP OUTER LEAVES THE PLANT MAKES MORE. IT'S THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING!
- * TIMING: START HARVESTING WHEN PLANTS HAVE SEVERAL TRUE LEAVES (NOT JUST THE FIRST BABY ONES). FOR MESCLUN MIXES, YOU CAN START SNIPPING BABY LEAVES WHEN THEY'RE JUST A FEW CM TALL FOR A TENDER MIX. ROCKET AND SPINACH ARE USUALLY READY IN 4-6 WEEKS FROM SEED, FASTER FROM SEEDLINGS.
- * DON'T WAIT TOO LONG: IF LEAVES GET BIG AND TOUGH, OR IF THE WEATHER HEATS UP, PLANTS MIGHT "BOLT" (SEND UP A FLOWER STALK). BOLTED LEAVES OFTEN TURN BITTER. SNIP REGULARLY TO DELAY BOLTING! IF IT BOLTS, LET IT FLOWER – BEES LOVE IT – THEN PULL IT AND REPLANT.



HOW TO HARVEST (BE GENTLE!)

05

1. GRAB CLEAN SCISSORS: KITCHEN SHEARS OR SHARP SCISSORS ARE PERFECT. CLEAN IS GOOD (A QUICK WIPE).
2. CHOOSE YOUR VICTIMS (LEAVES): TARGET THE LARGEST, OUTER LEAVES.
3. SNIP SMART: CUT THE LEAF STEM 'ABOUT 2-3CM (AN INCH) ABOVE THE BASE' OF THE PLANT. DON'T CUT RIGHT INTO THE CROWN (THE CENTRAL GROWING POINT).
4. BE SELECTIVE: TAKE A FEW LEAVES FROM EACH PLANT, RATHER THAN STRIPPING ONE BARE.
5. RINSE & ENJOY! GIVE THEM A QUICK, GENTLE RINSE IN COOL WATER. SPIN OR PAT DRY IF YOU LIKE, BUT FRESH IS BEST!

TURBO'S "SNIP & SIP" SALAD SUGGESTION: THE ULTIMATE REWARD!

THIS IS THE MOMENT OF PURE, FRESH MAGIC. DO THIS:

1. GRAB A BOWL: TAKE IT OUTSIDE TO YOUR POTS.
2. SNIP A HANDFUL: MIX IT UP! A FEW LEAVES OF BUTTER LETTUCE, A COUPLE OF PEPPERY ROCKET LEAVES, MAYBE A BABY SPINACH LEAF OR TWO. FANCY? SNIP A TINY BIT OF CHIVE OR PARSLEY.
3. MINIMAL RINSE (OPTIONAL): IF NEEDED, A SUPER QUICK SPLASH UNDER THE TAP. SHAKE OFF EXCESS.
4. THE DRESSING: KEEP IT SIMPLE TO TASTE THE FRESHNESS! DRIZZLE WITH:
 - * A SQUEEZE OF FRESH LEMON JUICE (THE ZING!)
 - * A GLUG OF GOOD QUALITY OLIVE OIL
 - * A TINY PINCH OF FLAKY SEA SALT (OPTIONAL)
 - * A CRACK OF BLACK PEPPER (OPTIONAL)
5. TOSS GENTLY: JUST ENOUGH TO COAT.
6. EAT IMMEDIATELY. SERIOUSLY, STAND THERE BY YOUR POTS AND TASTE THE DIFFERENCE. THAT VIBRANT, ALIVE FLAVOUR? THAT'S YOUR WIN. 'YUM!'

STORING LEFTOVERS (IF YOU MUST!):

- * SOMETIMES YOU SNIP MORE THAN YOU NEED. NO WORRIES!
- * POP THE UNWASHED LEAVES IN A CONTAINER OR PLASTIC BAG LINED WITH A 'SLIGHTLY DAMP PAPER TOWEL'.
- * SEAL IT AND STORE IT IN THE FRIDGE CRISPER DRAWER.
- * BEST EATEN WITHIN '1-2 DAYS'. BUT HONESTLY? FRESH IS UNBEATABLE. TRY TO SNIP JUST WHAT YOU NEED!

THAT FIRST 'SNIP & SIP' MOMENT? PURE GOLD. SAVOUR IT! YOU GREW THAT!

06

BONUS ROUND! BEYOND BASIC SALAD

READY TO LEVEL UP?

SO YOU'VE NAILED THE SALAD GREENS – EASY AS! FEELING ADVENTUROUS? POTS ARE WAY MORE VERSATILE THAN YOU'D THINK. HERE'S HOW TO TURN YOUR BALCONY OR WINDOWSILL INTO A MINI PRODUCE SECTION (MINUS THE QUEUES):

QUICK-GROW PICKS FOR POTS:

RADISHES: 'FAST & FUN!' READY IN 3-4 WEEKS. PLANT SEEDS SHALLOWLY, THIN 'EM EARLY. CRUNCHY BONUS: THEIR PEPPERY LEAVES GO GREAT IN SALADS TOO!

DWARF BEANS: LOOK FOR 'BUSH' VARIETIES (NO STAKES NEEDED!). SUNNY SPOT + DEEP POT = CRUNCHY GREEN BEANS IN 8 WEEKS. PRO TIP: PICK OFTEN TO KEEP 'EM PRODUCING!

BABY CARROTS: CHOOSE SHORT VARIETIES LIKE 'PARIS MARKET'. LOOSE, STONE-FREE MIX IS KEY! THIN SEEDLINGS RUTHLESSLY – YOUR PATIENCE REWARDS YOU WITH SWEET, THUMB-SIZED TREATS.

HERBS GALORE:

BASIL: SUMMER SUPERSTAR! PINCH OFF FLOWERS TO KEEP IT LEAFY.

MINT: 'WARNING: PLANT SOLO! IT'S A DELICIOUSLY INVASIVE LITTLE LEGEND.

CHIVES/SPRING ONIONS: SNIP 'N' REGROW FOREVER. EVEN WORKS FROM SUPERMARKET SCRAPS!

COMPANION PLANTING CHEAT SHEET:

GOT A BIG POT? PAIR UP FRIENDLY PLANTS!

LETTUCE + RADISHES: RADISHES BREAK UP SOIL; LETTUCE SHADES THEIR ROOTS.
TOMATOES + BASIL: FLAVOUR BFFS! BASIL REPELS PESTS TOO (NEEDS BIG POT + SUN).
CARROTS + CHIVES: ONIONY SCENT CONFUSES CARROT FLY.
BEANS + SPINACH: BEANS FEED THE SOIL; SPINACH LOVES THE BOOST!

‘TURBO’S RULE:’ MATCH PLANTS WITH SIMILAR NEEDS (SUN/WATER). NO CRAMMING –
GIVE ’EM BREATHING ROOM!

CONCLUSION & YOUR NEXT STEP

YOU DID IT – EASY AS!
LOOK AT YOU – SALAD SNIPPER, POT WHISPERER, BALCONY FARMER EXTRAORDINAIRE!

REMEMBER:

START SMALL: ONE POT OF MESCLUN IS A WIN.
EMBRACE THE OOPS: DROWNED A PLANT? BURNT A BASIL? WE’VE ALL BEEN THERE!
TASTE THE VICTORY: THAT ‘SNIP & SIP MOMENT’? PURE GOLD.

KEEP GROWING WITH US:

THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING!
FOR SEASONAL TIPS, TROUBLESHOOTING, AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT:
GOT QUESTIONS OR GARDEN WINS TO SHARE?
SEND US A QUACK AT: A.J.T.BOOKS01@GMAIL.COM

HAPPY GROWING, MY FRIEND. YOU’RE A BLOOMING LEGEND!

[VISIT MY WEBSITE: ALEXTHOMAS.ONLINE](http://ALEXTHOMAS.ONLINE)