

## —Dining In and Out—

### Cooking with Sharon



#### Great Side Salads on a budget.

Here are two salads that are another healthy alternative to the tossed green salad. These both can be eaten the same day, right after they're made or the next day. They are also good on the go, taking the ingredients to your summer house, feeding large crowds, or cut in half for just what is needed to feed the family. These crunchy sides taste great with any grilled steak, chicken, or pork loin. Trust me though, you'll find yourself making these savory sides more than one time! Since my family approves, these are now staples for the fridge and pantry.

#### Easy #1

##### Summer Black Bean Salad

- 2 cans rinsed/drained S&W Black beans low sodium

- 1 frozen small bag of corn-rinsed till thawed
  - 1 red pepper evenly chopped
  - ½ of red onion thinly diced and chopped
  - Handful of chopped cilantro
  - Even amounts of honey and apple cider vinegar (about 2 Tblsp. each)
  - Salt and pepper to taste
- Rinse and chop first 4 items, then put all ingredients in a bowl. Toss with previously mixed honey and vinegar to taste. Lightly salt and pepper.

#### Easy #2

##### Bleu cheese cabbage salad

- ½ head of green Napa cabbage sliced and chopped
- ¼ head of purple cabbage sliced and chopped
- ¼ thinly sliced and diced red onion
- ½ cup Danish bleu cheese or other bleu

- 1 Tblsp. lemon juice
- Hidden valley ranch dressing to taste (¼ cup)
- Fresh Black pepper and salt

Toss all chopped ingredients together in a bowl; add a couple squeezes of ranch dressing, lemon juice, pepper and salt. Tip: not too much dressing, remember it's easier to add more than it is to take out! Also the bleu gives it a good amount of flavor. If you don't like ranch you could mix mayo, champagne vinegar and lemon together as a dressing. You can also grate in ½ of a peeled carrot for preference. For left over lunch the next day, add the left over chopped up steak with the cabbage salad.

I really enjoy cabbage, not only for the health benefits but it stays nicely firm and fresh for days on end in the refrigerator—which makes it a fantastic cost saving food; something I think we all could use these days.

### Cornerstone Restaurant

#### An Early Morning Treasure

If perfectly set tables, shiny silverware and sparkling glassware are crucial for you to enjoy a meal out, then this is definitely not the place for you. If an honest breakfast is what you are after, then see if you can't get past the fact that many of the tables and chairs in the dining room don't match and each have a unique wobble.

When you walk in, don't expect a hostess or corporate style welcoming committee because it is up to you to find a place to sit in one of the tiny dining rooms. Once you are in, sit back and peruse the extensive breakfast menu that is filled with all of your typical American breakfast plates in addition to a section dedicated to the "build your own omelet" which creates an endless variety of combinations that will satisfy your picky breakfast appetite. All plates are reasonably priced between \$6 and \$8.

Coffee was on the table in a jiffy and our coffee mugs never dipped below the half way mark because our server knew the importance of keeping the coffee hot and full at all times! I decided on the typical breakfast grill that included two perfectly cooked eggs, thick slice of grilled ham, skillet-style fried potatoes, and toast. My husband ordered his favorite, Eggs Benedict, and his mother ordered French toast. The Eggs Benedict had its own café style of poached eggs perched atop grilled Canadian bacon and English muffin smothered with just the right amount of a light hollandaise sauce and also served with a generous portion



of fried potatoes. The French toast was light and fluffy and more than enough for my mother-in-law, so my husband and I were able to share a slice and wonder why French toast at home never comes out quite that delicious. The French toast, which alone was plenty for a modest eater, was also served with two eggs, and a choice of sausage, bacon or both!

If you are not up to creating sparkling conversation early in the morning then you will have no problem because the food was delivered hot and fresh in less than 10 minutes after we ordered. Our waitress obviously knows her customers and her restaurant and can create a seamless connection between the two by serving breakfast the way it should be. My only complaint is that our plates were never cleared when we finished eating, which in my opinion is an important finishing touch even for small diners and cafés.

When we had eaten all we could, the waitress left the hand-written ticket on the table and invited us to pay at the register. Like most, we are on a budget and we used a coupon from the Entertainment Book that saved us \$6 off of the ticket which brought the total to \$22 for breakfast for three. This deal makes it difficult to drive by this tiny, inconspicuous restaurant without stopping. If you are an early riser, there is another way to eat a piping hot breakfast while hardly making a dent in your pocket book. The Early Bird Special offers several choices of popular breakfasts for under \$4! The hardest part is getting there before 8:30. Be sure to call for details on this special.

Cornerstone Restaurant can be found at 6048 San Juan Avenue between Madison and Greenback. They open at 6am, but if breakfast is not your thing, pop in for lunch between 11am and 2:30 and try out their salads, burgers, veggie burgers, and sandwiches. For more information, visit their extensive website at [cornerstonerestaurant.net](http://cornerstonerestaurant.net).

Shannon McCann

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