

Recipe by Julia Heffelfinger

La Quinta Cobb Salad

Serves 4

There are endless iterations on the classic cobb salad, but for me the essentials are crispy bacon, tender chicken, juicy tomatoes and perfectly-cooked eggs. From there, it's really up to your imagination. In this recipe, I took inspiration from [Rancho Meladuco Date Farm](#)'s home in the Coachella Valley and added in sun-sweetened medjool dates and buttery hearts of palm. In place of a heavy, mayo-based dressing, we opt for a simple vinaigrette that also doubles as a marinade for the red onions. This colorful salad is a phenomenal lunch or summertime dinner, alongside some crusty bread and a crisp bottle of white wine.

Red Onion Vinaigrette

¼ cup olive oil

¼ cup grapeseed or canola oil

3 Tablespoons red wine vinegar

1 Tablespoon quality balsamic vinegar

½ teaspoon dried oregano

Pinch of sugar

Kosher salt and pepper

1 small red onion, thinly sliced

Cobb Salad

4 large eggs, at room temperature

8 slices thick-cut bacon

1 large head romaine lettuce, torn into bite size pieces

Kosher salt and pepper

2 cups diced rotisserie chicken

6 Rancho Meladuco medjool dates, pitted and sliced into coins (see Note)

1 cup thinly sliced hearts of palm (about 3 stalks from a can)

1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved

4 ounces blue cheese, crumbled

1 avocado—halved, peeled, pitted and chopped

Thinly sliced chives, for garnish

- 1. Make the Vinaigrette** In a small bowl, whisk the oil, vinegar, oregano and sugar together. Season with salt and pepper. Add the sliced red onion to the vinaigrette and let marinate at room temperature while you assemble the salad, stirring occasionally.
- 2. Prepare the Salad** Set up an ice bath and bring a small pot of water to a boil. Gently lower the eggs into the water and cook, stirring occasionally, for 7 minutes. Transfer to the ice bath and let cool for 5 minutes. Peel the eggs while they're slightly warm, then cut into wedges.
- 3.** Meanwhile, in a large skillet, cook the bacon over moderate heat until crispy on both sides, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Let cool completely, then break into bite size pieces.

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4. In a large bowl, toss the romaine with some of the red onion vinaigrette (reserving the onions for garnish) and season with salt and pepper. Transfer to your largest platter or bowl and arrange in an even layer.
5. Arrange the chicken in a straight line across the middle of the platter. Repeat with the bacon, eggs, dates, hearts of palm, tomatoes, blue cheese and avocado, creating a rainbow of toppings. Using a fork, remove the marinated red onions from the vinaigrette and arrange alongside the other toppings. Drizzle more vinaigrette over the top and season with salt and pepper. Garnish with thinly sliced chives and serve right away.

NOTE To cut your dates into coins, remove the pit from the top of the date with pliers or strong tweezers. Check out the [Rancho Meladuco Instagram page](#) for a quick video tutorial on how to do this.