

SALADS

AMANIDES

In Catalunya and the rest of Spain, salads are rarely served as a side dish; they are considered first courses. And the idea of a salad as lunch on its own is practically unknown, except at the few American-influenced restaurants that have adopted this idea.

The most common salad in Catalunya is, of course, *amanida catalana*, a "Catalan salad" of lettuce greens, firm tomatoes, carrots, and onions, with Catalan cold cuts. These may include *botifarra de Vic* (a mild cooked white pork sausage), cured salami-type or smoked sausages, mountain-cured hams, etc.

Other Catalan classics are Fava Bean Salad with Cured Ham and Mint (p. 56); *Xatonada*, Tuna Salad with Anchovies, Olives, and Romesco Sauce (p. 57); and *Esqueixada*, Shredded Salt Cod Salad with Tomatoes, Peppers, and Onions (p. 58). Though they sound quite substantial, all of these would be served as a first course, while *Amanida Russa*, a "Russian" cooked vegetable salad (p. 56), is more typically served as a *tapa*. Also included in this chapter are a few personal recipes that I particularly enjoy in America.

Orange and Celery Salad with Mint

*Amanida de Taronja,
Api, i Menta*

Serves six to eight.

*This refreshing and unusual salad,
quite easy to prepare, can be served
either as a light first course or as a palate-freshener just before dessert.*

For the dressing:

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, or
to taste
1/4 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black
pepper, or to taste

For the salad:

2 large oranges
1/4 pound small young carrots,
scraped and thickly grated
2 inner celery stalks (about 6
ounces), cut thinly crosswise
1 head Boston lettuce, cut into small
pieces
2 tablespoons fresh mint leaves, cut
into thin strips

In a small bowl, mix all ingredients for the dressing. Taste for seasoning.

Peel oranges, removing all the white pith, and cut them into wedges, discarding membrane. (If they are large, cut sections in two.) Just before serving, toss all salad ingredients in a bowl with the dressing.