

# Ambrosia Salad

When I (Jonathan Davis) was a kid, I had a babysitter named Becky that had immigrated to Toronto from upstate New York. Although I was only five or six years old, I have clear memories of the first time we cooked together. It was November and Becky was homesick because she was missing Thanksgiving back in “The States”. I only understood this after I moved to the US and experienced the holiday for myself. Becky and I spent a long afternoon making many of the foods she wished she could have been cooking and eating with her family. I remember having a great time but I’ll confess that I only remember one dish – Ambrosia salad.

The typical Thanksgiving table would benefit from more dishes like Ambrosia salad. Well-made, it provides a counterpoint to everything else on the table. It is simply a fruit salad with a cream-based dressing that provides brightness to an otherwise heavy and comforting meal. Canned fruit and Coolwhip need not be involved but I do ask that you do include at least a few marshmallows. They lighten the dish and provide a little sweetness. They also speak to a uniquely American optimism and independence-of-thought – that marshmallows can be part of a salad. And just like smoldering hickory under a pig, melted American cheese over a hamburger patty, or the fact that human boots could actually touch the surface of the moon, they indicate that occasionally you guys are right about something!

While I am extremely happy to be back at home in Canada, I will deeply miss the United States next Thursday. I hope to be back at an American table for Thanksgiving as soon as I possibly can. For now, I hope you try to get more marshmallows into the holiday. This salad should help.

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## Recipe

This salad is essentially a tropical fruit salad with a cream-based dressing. The fruits and proportions can be adjusted to suit your needs. The strength of this salad for Thanksgiving is that it can be made a day or two in advance.

## Ingredients

1/3 to 1/2 cored pineapple, roughly chopped

1/2 cup pitted frozen cherries, defrosted

3 Valencia/juice oranges, segmented (OR 1 can mandarin orange segments)

3/4 cup shaved sweetened coconut

1 cup whole-fat sour cream

½ teaspoon vanilla

1 cup mini marshmallows (preferably “mini” and “multicoloured”, but “artisanal if needed)

½ cup shelled pecans, lightly toasted and crushed (for garnish)

Whipped cream (for garnish)

## **Method**

Combine all ingredients except pecans and whipped cream and stir gently to combine

Refrigerate for a minimum of one hour, preferably overnight

Garnish with pecans and whipped cream