

## *Rainbow Cobb*



Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Violet, and Indigo. These colors are what Mother Nature provided to us. The hues are natural and beautiful. These vibrant colors are present in most fruits and vegetables adding a spark to many plates.

The influx of multicolored “rainbow food” has become a popular food trend- flashing back to the disco era. These brightly colored foods appeal to many in the Millennial Generation as a new food fad. Unfortunately, most of these recipes require the heavy use of food coloring, consisting of unknown dyes and ingredients to tint the food. I have seen rainbow cake, rainbow bagels, and most recently rainbow pizza, making the stomach of every chef, nutritionist and dietician I know, wrench with fear. I’m not sure if it was the unnatural addition of copious amounts of food coloring, or the unnatural amount of cheese needed to generate enough grease to emulsify the colors. Either way I knew there had to be a better way.

In the early 2000’s the USDA started a campaign encouraging people, especially children and adolescents to “Eat the Rainbow”. The focus was to get a wide range of colors from fruit and vegetables on the plate. Each color provides a different set of phytochemicals, vitamins and minerals in the food. This is a far cry from the candy companies “eat a rainbow” marketing slogan, as hilarious as the commercials may be.

The color of fruit and vegetable is due to different pigments offering a different range of health benefits.

Red=Lycopene= healthy circulation, healthy nerve function, anti-cancer, Vitamin C

Orange= Carotenoids= Vitamin A, eyesight, reduce the risk of heart disease, anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant

Yellow= Xanthophyll= healthy hearing, anti-cancer, Vitamin C, eye health

Green= Chlorophyll and Isothiocyanates= phytochemicals, lots of vitamins, lowering of blood pressure, promotes liver health, and helps remove carcinogens,  
Blue and Purple= Anthocyanins= healthy circulation, healthy nerve function, anticancer, lower blood pressure, heart health  
White= Flavonoids= healthy immune system, healthy cholesterol levels, anti-cancer, free radical balance

Studies show that approximately 50% of all heart related problems are caused by the person's diet. The World Heart Federation states that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables results in a 73% reduction of cardiovascular risk. The World Health Organization finds consumption of fruits and vegetables has been widely associated with a reduction of Coronary Heart Disease, Stroke and High blood pressure. So, it is recommended to eat a wide range of colors, from Mother Nature, not coming out of a bottle. Here's a healthy way to create a rainbow of nutrients?

### *Rainbow Cobb Salad*

Chef Jennifer M. Denlinger M.Ed., CCC, CHEP



This is based off the traditional cobb salad, but with the addition of other vegetables. Try experimenting with your favorite vegetables (and fruits!) Yes, there is a small bacon and cheese in it, but it is in moderation.

Serves 6

Here's what's in it!

*Indigo*- 1 small head radicchio, thinly sliced

*Purple*- 1 small red onion, minced

*Blue*- ½ # red cabbage, thinly sliced. Toss the cabbage in 2 tbsp. of baking soda, and cover with boiling water. Stir and let sit until the desired hue is achieved. Rinse in cool water and pat dry.

*Green*- 4 or 5 leaves of kale, thinly sliced (or romaine lettuce, or 1 cup raw spinach)

1 Haas avocado, diced, and tossed in juice from ½ lemon or lime and a pinch of salt  
1 small cucumber, skin on, diced small

*Yellow-* 2 hard boiled eggs, peeled, and grated on box grater

1 small yellow pepper, deseeded and diced small

*Orange-* 1 small carrot, peeled and shredded fine

*Red-* 2 Roma tomatoes, diced small

4 strips of bacon, cooked to a crisp

*White-* ¼ cup bleu cheese or feta cheese crumbles  
cauliflower crumbles if desired

#### Simple vinaigrette

1 tbsp. Dijon mustard

1 tbsp. honey

¼ cup apple cider vinegar

½ cup extra virgin olive oil

salt and pepper to taste.

1. In a bowl whisk together the mustard, honey and vinegar.
2. Slowly add the oil while whisking.
3. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

With dressing only 397 calories per serving!

© 2016 Chef Jennifer M. Denlinger [www.FloridaChef.net](http://www.FloridaChef.net)