

Cabbage & Apple Holiday Slaw

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I think cabbage is underrated. It's one of those ingredients we often overlook, yet it brings so much crunch, sweetness, and freshness to a holiday spread. While everyone gravitates toward the heavier, richer dishes this time of year, I always find myself craving something bright that cuts through all that indulgence. That's where this Cabbage & Apple Holiday Slaw comes in.

It's crisp, colorful, and so refreshing—shredded cabbage and carrots tossed with thin slices of sweet apple, toasted pecans for warmth, and just enough shaved Parmesan to give it that savory Italian touch. Then everything gets coated in a creamy apple-cider vinaigrette that ties it all together. It's the kind of side dish that not only balances your table but also surprises people with how simple and delicious it is. I make it every year, and there are never leftovers.

Things to know about this Cabbage & Apple Holiday Slaw

This slaw is incredibly make-ahead friendly, which makes it perfect for busy holiday cooking. You can shred the cabbage and carrots, slice the apples, and even mix the dressing a day in advance—just keep everything separate until you're ready to serve. The salad stays crisp for hours after dressing thanks to the sturdiness of the cabbage. You can also swap pecans for walnuts, add dried cranberries for a sweeter touch, or use Asiago instead of Parmesan for a sharper flavor. It's a flexible, crowd-pleasing side dish that fits into any Christmas or holiday menu.

Variations

- **Cranberry Twist:** Add dried cranberries or pomegranate seeds for color and sweetness.
- **Walnut & Blue Cheese:** Use toasted walnuts and crumbled gorgonzola for a bold flavor.
- **Maple Dijon:** Swap honey for maple syrup and add extra Dijon mustard.
- **Creamy Italian:** Add Greek yogurt or sour cream to the dressing and include shaved fennel.
- **Apple & Pear:** Use a mix of thinly sliced apples and pears.
- **Nut-Free:** Replace nuts with pumpkin seeds or sunflower seeds.
- **Savory Version:** Skip the honey and apple. Add red onion, extra vinegar, and red pepper flakes.

If you love fresh and festive holiday sides, pair this slaw

with:

- **Italian Holiday Chicken Soup**
- **Savory Sausage & Mushroom**
- **The Ultimate Thanksgiving dinner Guide**

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For the slaw

- 4 cups shredded green cabbage
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 2 large crisp apple, thinly sliced (Honeycrisp or Pink Lady)
- 1 cup toasted pecans
- 1 tbsp fresh or dried thyme
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shaved Parmesan (or Asiago)

Creamy Apple-Cider Vinaigrette

- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt or mayonnaise
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup olive oil
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 small garlic clove, grated
- Salt and black pepper to taste

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine the shredded cabbage, shredded carrots, apple slices, toasted pecans, shaved Parmesan, and thyme.
2. In a separate small bowl, whisk together the mayo, olive oil, apple cider vinegar, honey, Dijon, grated garlic, salt, and pepper until smooth.
3. Pour the dressing over the slaw and toss gently to evenly coat.
4. Chill for at least 20 minutes before serving to let the flavors meld.
5. Garnish with extra pecans and thyme before serving.