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Subject: Re: food
wow--such a dear! (You're sure your mom's willing!) In any case, there's not much of a recipe for the salad, and there's none at all for the chicken stuff--that's Peppridge Farm chicken Monterey in tiny Peppridge Farm patty shells (I got both at the Peppridge Farm store in Glen Echo, MD, which is right off the Beltway, first exit into MD past the Potomac. The store is in the little shopping center at the intersection of Goldsboro Rd. and MacArthur Blvd. Take the Clara Barton Parkway exit south off of the Beltway, turn off at MacArthur Blvd exit--the exit just before Chain Bridge--and turn left onto MacArthur. The shopping center's within a block, just beyond the Glen Echo amusement park. What the Peppridge Farm store has varies each time I go, but they usually have interesting things, especially in their frozen food case. And, of course, they always have bread and cookies). As for the salad, I start with mixed spring greens from Fresh Fields (you can also get these at Giant, but they tend to be less fresh). To that I add a vinaigrette dressing, for which I'll give you the proportions: 3 to 1, olive oil to red wine vinegar (that is, 3 Tablespoons oil to 1 Tablespoon red wine vinegar); dash (1/8 tsp.) dried mustard; 1/4 tsp. dried basil or thyme; salt & pepper. Add your dry ingredients to the wine vinegar to dissolve, then slowly whisk in the oil until you have an emulsion. Easiest way to do it is to put all ingredients in a glass jar with tight-fitting lid and shake until you get the emulsion, or a creamy look. It's a chemical change, so it really should look different from the original oil-vinegar. Do this just before you mix with greens. For the size of salad I've brought to work, I usually make up at least 6 to 2, or even 9 to 3 proportions, then save what I don't use. Don't refrigerate, but don't keep forever on your shelf, either. A good olive oil, by the way, is Alessi (I think that's how it's spelled). You can get it at Giant, and it's in a very distinctive bottle--with a little handle to one side. Reasonably priced. I use Progresso red wine vinegar. If you like your vinaigrette more piquant, use more vinegar to oil. You can also use lemon juice in place of some or all of the vinegar. And, of course, you can get fancy and experiment with oils--there are a lot of neat ones out there, like walnut oil, etc. After you've combined vinaigrette and greens (just before serving), add part of a can of drained mandarin oranges (I think Giant calls them Spanish oranges. They're in a smallish can in the canned fruit section. I prefer the kind with light syrup, even though I drain off the syrup. They're slightly sweeter). Work them into the salad a bit. If you mix in too thoroughly, they'll all fall to the bottom. If you want, you can put the drained oranges in a small bowl first and pour a little vinaigrette over them. Then add to salad. Top off the salad with toasted pine nuts--as many as you want. Perhaps 2-3 Tablespoons? 1/4 cup for large salad? To toast, stir in a little olive oil over low heat for a couple of minutes, stirring frequently, until just starting to turn. They'll darken quickly and burn, so be careful. The main thing is that they lose that stark

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