

With careful shopping, I brought this salad in for about \$6.74. That does not include the goat cheese or pine nuts, but I priced out with almonds, instead. Note I didn't use bananas in my salad or pricing, but they're very inexpensive ingredients.

- Chicken:** I never buy full price chicken – it goes on sale too often. Some sales are better than others, but usually every few weeks it will drop to \$1.89 a pound, and I stock up then. I prefer bone in breasts over boneless (see [Bone-In Chicken Breasts, How to Deal with in a Frugal Manner](#)) but I'll buy either bone in or boneless at this price. I portion the chicken in Ziploc bags, a breast per person for meals and freeze. If breasts are super large, I'll trim them down to about six ounces and make tenders for the kids or use the bits for stir fry. \$1.41
- Romaine lettuce:** Look for 99 cents a head, [buying by the head](#) is much less expensive than the prebagged varieties. Those bagged varieties, even on sale, cost more than the fresh heads. They often run from 4 to 10 times the cost of lettuce by the head. There's a reason it's priced out by the ounce instead of the pound; it makes it harder to compare. I used about 1/2 a head, cost 50 cents.
- Strawberries:** These go on sale all summer long, so there isn't much sense in paying full price – timing is key. Aldi has had them for \$1.00 a pound, a great price in our area, and the regular grocery stores have been having sales, especially prior to every [summer holiday](#). At the high-end, I wouldn't pay more than \$2.00 to \$2.50 a pound. I always smell my berries in the store – if they don't smell good, they won't taste good. Cost: \$1.00.
- Almonds:** It's really worth while to look at alternatives to your grocery – I often buy at Aldi or our Mill's Fleet Farm – which is a farm supply store with all sorts of products – everything from saddles to outdoor furniture. Sometimes the drug stores (Walgreen, CVS, etc.) have good prices. If you have a “nut supply” house in your area, their prices can't be beat. In the regular grocery store, check the baking aisle, the snack aisle and the bulk aisle – and check for coupons, too, on some nuts. I also stock up around Christmas and freeze my nuts. Whole almonds are usually the best value unless you have a great sales price and coupon on the smaller packages of fancier cuts. I look for a price of \$4.99 a pound, for whole almonds. Today, I used sliced, with a coupon, cost about a dollar.
- Blueberries:** These go on sale all summer long, so there isn't much sense in paying full price – timing is key. Aldi has had them for \$1.69 a pound, a great price in our area, and the regular grocery stores have been having sales,

especially prior to every [summer holiday](#). At the high-end, I wouldn't pay more than \$2.00 a pound. I always smell my berries in the store - if they don't smell good, they won't taste good. Cost: a buck.

•**Honey:** Can be really pricey. I have a lovely friend who gives me honey she's found on her travels for Christmas every year...I often have to fortify by honey bought at...strangely enough...Walgreens. They have coupons in their ads for honey when it is on sale, and those can often be combined with manufacturer coupons. Keep your honey lid clean so it doesn't stick, and if your honey ever crystallizes, simply place the bottle in very hot water. Walgreens is the best pricing I've seen. 1/3 cup. 75 cents .

•**Honeydew:** I always try to buy on sale - and I usually find the best prices on the per item type sales - when a honeydew goes on sale for \$1.99, for instance, as opposed to so much per pound. Honeydew is a great snack to have on hand, and if it looks like the family won't be eating it all, I cube it up and make a fruit salad. Cost: \$.50.

•**Olive Oil:** I have a little strategy for buying olive oil - using coupons and sales to lower the price, so click on the link. I also look for new brands and stock up - heavy competition means that when a new brand comes to the store, it is often at a fantastic price for a few weeks, then settles in at around the same price as the others. I think it's important to use olive oil as opposed to many others - the health benefits outweigh a bit more extra cost, and it can be had at a very reasonable price. I also like the fact that Olive oil contains no hidden trans fats like Canola or Vegetable oil. Cost for this recipe: 3 cents.

•**Yogurt:** I habitually buy the large cartons of yogurt, even when I can get the individual ones on sale with a coupon, just because I try to avoid as many additives and as much sugar as possible and I find them to be a bit better quality. If I feel like a flavored yogurt, I'll add in a bit of fruit to my bowl, or maybe a teaspoon of jam. Cost \$4.99 a carton (four cups) you can see why I've started making [my own](#). This amount was 55 cents.

•**Vinegar:** I pick up a jug of white & cider vinegar around Easter - often with a coupon, and often on an unadvertised sale. It keeps forever and is dirt cheap. The better vinegars are often on sale at Easter, and on sale with coupons sporadically through the summer. Many can be picked up at no cost or for just pennies. Stock up because great sales other times of the year are much less likely and vinegar is a component of so many recipes. Cost nominal. If your vinegar grows a "mother" just remove it, it's still perfectly fine.