

Picnic Salads That Can Take the Heat

It's time to welcome those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer with picnics at the park or ball field, family reunions and block parties, holiday barbecues and more.

By Linda Coss

Good friends, the great outdoors and mouthwatering food are all ingredients for a terrific time. No picnic spread would be complete without a garden-fresh salad—bountiful bowls of potato salads, vegetable salads and pasta salads make the most of summer produce and tempt warm-weather appetites. And so that you can be sure that your salads are at their freshest and best even when the temperature's rising, this collection of savory salads are specially developed to beat the heat. For helpful tips on keeping food fresh, see Food Safety Tips on page 24.

Fruited Carrot Salad

This salad is a favorite of my son Kevin.

- 3 tablespoons raspberry, white wine or rice vinegar**
- 2 tablespoons canola oil**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil**
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste**
- 1 (1-pound) bag peeled baby-cut carrots**

¾ cup mixed dried fruit bits
(Buy the variety that contains raisins, apples, apricots and peaches.)

In a small bowl or measuring cup, whisk together the raspberry vinegar, canola oil, olive oil, cinnamon and black pepper. Set aside.

Using a food processor that has been fitted with a shredding disc, grate the carrots. Place carrots in a serving bowl and add dried fruit bits and the oil/vinegar mixture; mix well. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours. Serves 8. ▶





Linda's Corn Salad

This quick and attractive corn salad is a great side dish to serve with chicken or beef.

- 1 (11-ounce) can whole-kernel corn, drained, chilled or 2 cups fresh or frozen kernels**
- 3 tablespoons sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil, drained and diced (reserve ½ tablespoon oil)**
- 2 tablespoons minced green onions, tops only**
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar**
- 1 teaspoon bottled minced garlic**
- 1 teaspoon crumbled dried oregano leaves**
- Black pepper to taste**

Place corn, sun-dried tomatoes, sun-dried tomato oil, green onion tops, balsamic vinegar, garlic, oregano leaves and black pepper in serving bowl; mix well. Serve immediately or refrigerate. Serves 6.

New Potatoes With Sun-Dried Tomato Dressing

This flavorful potato dish is one of my favorites.

- 2 pounds tiny new red potatoes, washed**
- ¼ cup olive oil**
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar**
- ½ cup julienne-sliced sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil, cut in half lengthwise**
- 1 tablespoon salt-free seasoning blend**
- 2 green onions, chopped**

Place potatoes in a 3-quart pan and add enough water to just cover potatoes. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes or until a fork can easily pierce the center of the largest potato; drain.

To prepare dressing, whisk together olive oil, balsamic vinegar, sun-dried

tomatoes and seasoning blend in a small bowl. Place drained potatoes and chopped green onions in serving bowl. Pour dressing over potatoes and toss gently to coat. Chill. Serves 6.

California Sunburst Salad

For best results at your picnic, pack the ingredients separately, and then assemble the salad just before serving.



- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- ½ teaspoon dried dill weed
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- Salt to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 (7-ounce) package ready-to-eat butter lettuce with radicchio, torn into bite-sized pieces
- 1 medium orange, peeled, sectioned, and cut into small pieces
- 1 medium-sized ripe avocado, peeled and sliced
- 4 medium or 3 large stalks celery, thinly sliced
- ½ medium cucumber, peeled, cut in half lengthwise and thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons sweetened dried cranberries

To make dressing, place olive oil, white wine vinegar, orange juice, Dijon mustard, dill weed, sugar, salt and pepper in small bowl; mix well with fork. Set aside.

Combine prepared lettuce, orange, avocado, celery, cucumber and dried cranberries in serving bowl. Toss with dressing and serve immediately. Serves 5.

Cool & Fresh Pasta Salad

Because this fruity pasta salad is so refreshing, it's perfect for a picnic on a hot summer day. Plus, it's very low in fat and loaded with vitamin C!

- 1 (12-ounce) package tri-colored rotini
- 1 tablespoon oil
- ½ teaspoon peeled, minced fresh gingerroot
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 (16-ounce) bag frozen stir-fry vegetables (including sugar snap peas, broccoli, green beans, carrots, celery, water chestnuts, onions and red pepper)
- 1 (20-ounce) can pineapple chunks (reserve juice)
- ⅓ cup frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed



Cook pasta following manufacturer's instructions; drain.

While pasta is cooking, heat oil in 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add gingerroot, soy sauce and frozen vegetables to skillet; sauté for approximately 6 minutes, stirring frequently, until vegetables are thawed and heated through.

Place drained pasta, cooked vegetable mixture, canned pineapple with juice and orange juice concentrate in large serving bowl; mix well. Cover and refrigerate at least 8 hours. Serves 10 to 12.

Angel-Hair Pasta With Sesame-Ginger Dressing

This pasta is equally delicious served hot as a side dish or cold as a salad.

- 1 small zucchini
- 1 medium carrot, peeled
- 1 (8-ounce) package angel-hair pasta

- 1½ teaspoons bottled minced garlic
- 1 (½ x ½ x ¼-inch) piece of fresh gingerroot, peeled
- ¼ cup rice vinegar
- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- Salt to taste
- Black pepper to taste

In a 4-quart pot, bring 2½ quarts of water to a boil over high heat.

While water is boiling, shred zucchini and carrot using a food processor or grater. Place the grated vegetables in a colander.

Cook angel-hair pasta over low heat for 3 to 4 minutes, stirring occasionally; drain over vegetables in colander.

Place garlic, gingerroot, rice vinegar, canola oil, sesame oil, salt and pepper in a food processor or blender process until completely smooth.

Place cooked pasta-vegetable mixture in serving bowl. Add dressing and toss to coat. Serve immediately or refrigerate and use as a cold salad. Serves 6 to 8. ■

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