

## # Easy Cashew Chicken Pasta Salad

**\*\*Beat the summer heat with this refreshing and satisfying Easy Cashew Chicken Pasta Salad! Perfect for family gatherings, potlucks, or a quick weeknight dinner, this dish is a crowd-pleaser that combines tender chicken, crunchy cashews, and a tangy dressing.\*\***

### ## Ingredients:

- 3 cups cooked rotini pasta
- 2 cups cooked and diced chicken breast
- 1 cup cashews
- 1 cup grapes, halved
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup diced red onion
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tbsp honey
- Salt and pepper to taste

### ## Instructions:

1. **\*\*Cook the Pasta:\*\*** Follow the package instructions to cook the rotini pasta. Once done, drain the pasta and let it cool completely.
2. **\*\*Prepare the Salad Base:\*\*** In a large bowl, combine the cooled pasta, diced chicken breast, cashews, halved grapes, chopped celery, and diced red onion.
3. **\*\*Make the Dressing:\*\*** In a separate small bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, plain Greek yogurt, apple cider vinegar, honey, salt, and pepper until smooth and well combined.
4. **\*\*Combine Everything:\*\*** Pour the creamy dressing over the pasta mixture in the large bowl. Toss everything together until all the ingredients are evenly coated with the dressing.
5. **\*\*Chill:\*\*** Cover the bowl and place the salad in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour. This chilling time allows the flavors to meld together beautifully.

6. **\*\*Serve:\*\*** Once chilled, give the salad a good stir, then serve it cold and enjoy this delightful dish!

#### **## Notes:**

- **\*\*Chicken Variations:\*\*** Feel free to use any cooked chicken you have on hand—grilled, poached, or even rotisserie chicken works well in this salad.
- **\*\*Nut-Free Option:\*\*** If you have nut allergies or prefer a nut-free salad, you can substitute the cashews with sunflower seeds or pumpkin seeds.
- **\*\*Sweetness Level:\*\*** Adjust the amount of honey according to your preference. If you like a sweeter dressing, you can add a bit more honey.
- **\*\*Pasta Choices:\*\*** While rotini pasta holds up well in this salad due to its shape, you can use other types of pasta such as bow-tie, penne, or elbow macaroni.

#### **## Suggestions:**

- **\*\*Add More Veggies:\*\*** For an extra burst of color and nutrition, consider adding chopped bell peppers, shredded carrots, or cherry tomatoes.
- **\*\*Protein Options:\*\*** Swap the chicken for cooked shrimp, tofu, or even cooked quinoa for a vegetarian variation.
- **\*\*Fresh Herb Garnish:\*\*** Fresh herbs like parsley, basil, or cilantro make a wonderful garnish, adding a touch of green and fresh flavor to the salad.
- **\*\*Serving Ideas:\*\*** This pasta salad pairs perfectly with grilled meats or can be served as a standalone meal for a lighter option.

#### **## Conclusion:**

Whether you are hosting a summer cookout, looking for a dish to bring to a potluck, or simply want an easy and delicious meal at home, the Easy Cashew Chicken Pasta Salad is your go-to recipe. With its delightful combination of textures and flavors, this salad is sure to become a favorite in your household. Don't wait—give it a try and enjoy a bite of summer in every forkful!

#### **## FAQ:**

**\*\*Q: Can I make this salad ahead of time?\***

**A:** Absolutely! This salad is perfect for making ahead. Prepare the salad and store it in the refrigerator for up to 2 days. Just give it a good stir before serving.

**\*\*Q: Can I use a different type of nut?\***

**A:** Yes, you can easily substitute cashews with other nuts like almonds, pecans, or walnuts depending on your preference.

**\*\*Q: Is there a substitute for Greek yogurt?\***

**A:** You can use sour cream or regular yogurt as a substitute for Greek yogurt in the dressing.

**\*\*Q: How do I store leftovers?\***

**A:** Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. The flavors will continue to meld and taste even better after sitting.

**\*\*Q: Can I add more dressing to the salad?\***

**A:** If you prefer a creamier salad, feel free to double the dressing recipe and add more according to your preference.