



Greek Orzo Pasta Salad

Introduction

Greek Orzo Pasta Salad is a delightful and refreshing dish that brings the vibrant flavors of the Mediterranean to your table. Not only is it easy to prepare, but it can also be served as a main dish or a side, making it a versatile addition to any meal. Perfect for picnics, barbecues, or just a light dinner, this salad is sure to be a hit.

Detailed Ingredients with measures

1/4 cup red wine vinegar

1/4 cup olive oil

2 Tbsp. vegetable oil

1 clove garlic, minced (or use citrus zester!)

1 tsp. dijon mustard

1 tsp. dried oregano

1/4 tsp. sea salt

1/8 tsp. black pepper

8 oz. orzo (1 1/3 cup)

1 1/2 cups sliced cucumbers (Persian sliced into half moons)

1 1/2 cups grape or cherry tomatoes (sliced in half)

4 oz. feta cheese (cubed)

1/3 cup kalamata olives (sliced in half)

1/4 cup fresh dill (chopped)

Prep Time

15 minutes

Cook Time

10 minutes

Total Time

25 minutes

Yield

Serves 4 to 6

Instructions

- 1. Cook the orzo according to the package instructions.**
- 2. While the orzo is cooking, prepare the dressing. In a large bowl, combine red wine vinegar, olive oil, vegetable oil, minced garlic, dijon mustard, dried oregano, sea salt, and black pepper. Whisk until everything is emulsified.**
- 3. Once the orzo is cooked, drain it in a colander and rinse quickly under cold water to stop the cooking process. Add the orzo to the bowl with the dressing and toss to combine, stirring occasionally to help it cool. The orzo will absorb some of the dressing.**
- 4. Prepare the other ingredients: thinly slice the cucumber, slice the tomatoes in half, cut the feta into cubes, slice the olives in half, and roughly chop the dill.**
- 5. Add the cucumber, tomatoes, feta, and olives to the bowl with the orzo. Gently toss everything together until well combined.**
- 6. Spoon the orzo salad into shallow bowls. Top with chopped dill, a drizzle of olive oil, and freshly cracked black pepper.**
- 7. Serve immediately or refrigerate for a bit to let the flavors meld.**

Conclusion

This refreshing Greek Orzo Pasta Salad captures the essence of Mediterranean cuisine with its vibrant ingredients and zesty dressing. Enjoy

it as a fulfilling meal or a scrumptious side dish at your next gathering.

Detailed Directions and Instructions

Cook the Orzo

Cook the orzo according to the package instructions. Make sure to check the cooking time, as it may vary depending on the brand.

See also Bacon Cheeseburger Garlic Bombs

Prepare the Dressing

While the orzo is cooking, mix the dressing in a large bowl. Combine 1/4 cup red wine vinegar, 1/4 cup olive oil, 2 tablespoons vegetable oil, 1 minced clove of garlic, 1 teaspoon dijon mustard, 1 teaspoon dried oregano, 1/4 teaspoon sea salt, and 1/8 teaspoon black pepper. Whisk the mixture until it is emulsified.

Drain and Rinse the Orzo

When the orzo is done cooking, drain it in a colander and quickly rinse it with cold water to stop the cooking process.

Add Orzo to Dressing

Add the drained orzo to the bowl with the dressing. Toss to combine and stir occasionally to help cool the orzo. It may seem like there is a lot of dressing, but the orzo will absorb some of it.

Prepare Fresh Ingredients

While the orzo is cooling, prepare the fresh ingredients:

- Thinly slice 1 1/2 cups of cucumbers.

- Slice 1 1/2 cups of grape or cherry tomatoes in half.
- Cut 4 ounces of feta cheese into cubes.
- Slice 1/3 cup of kalamata olives in half.
- Roughly chop 1/4 cup of fresh dill.

Add Fresh Ingredients to the Orzo

Add the prepared cucumbers, tomatoes, feta cheese, and olives to the bowl of orzo. Gently toss all the ingredients together to combine.

Serve the Salad

Spoon the orzo salad into shallow bowls. Top each serving with chopped dill, a drizzle of olive oil, and freshly cracked pepper.

Notes

Flavor Enhancement

For extra flavor, consider adding other herbs such as parsley or basil.

Storage

The salad can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to three days.

See also [Slow Cooker Root Beer BBQ Pork Ribs](#)

Serving Suggestions

This dish is great as a side or as a light main dish, perfect for picnics or potlucks.

Texture Notes

This salad is best served chilled, as the flavors meld wonderfully when allowed to rest in the refrigerator for a few hours before serving.

Cook techniques

Cooking Orzo

To cook orzo, bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add the orzo and cook according to the package instructions until al dente. Drain in a colander and rinse quickly with cold water to stop the cooking process.

Preparing the Dressing

In a large bowl, combine red wine vinegar, olive oil, vegetable oil, minced garlic, Dijon mustard, dried oregano, sea salt, and black pepper. Whisk the ingredients together until emulsified for a smooth dressing.

Chopping Vegetables and Cheese

For the salad, thinly slice cucumbers, slice cherry tomatoes in half, cut feta cheese into cubes, and slice kalamata olives in half. Roughly chop fresh dill to be added at the end for flavor.

Tossing the Salad

After rinsing the orzo, combine it with the dressing in the large bowl. Gently toss to ensure the orzo is coated, and add in the prepared cucumber, tomatoes, feta, and olives. Mix carefully to avoid breaking up the feta.

Serving the Salad

Spoon the orzo salad into shallow bowls. Top with extra chopped dill, a drizzle of olive oil, and freshly cracked black pepper for an enhanced flavor.

FAQ

Can I make the orzo salad in advance?

Yes, you can make the orzo salad ahead of time. It can be stored in the refrigerator for several hours or overnight, allowing the flavors to meld.

What can I substitute for feta cheese?

If you don't have feta cheese, you can use goat cheese or even a vegan cheese alternative for a similar texture and flavor.

Is it possible to make this salad gluten-free?

Yes, to make this salad gluten-free, you can substitute the orzo with a gluten-free pasta option.

See also [Cherry Clafoutis](#)

Can I add other ingredients to this salad?

Absolutely! You can customize your orzo salad by adding ingredients like bell peppers, red onion, or artichoke hearts for more variety.

What type of olives should I use?

Kalamata olives are recommended for their robust flavor, but you can also use green olives or black olives depending on your preference.

Conclusion

The Greek Orzo Pasta Salad is a vibrant, refreshing dish that perfectly captures the essence of Mediterranean flavors. With its combination of tender orzo, fresh vegetables, and briny feta and olives, this salad is not only delicious but also versatile and easy to prepare. It's a perfect side dish for summer barbecues, a light lunch, or as a delightful main course. Enjoy the bold flavors and textures that make this salad a crowd-pleaser!

More recipes suggestions and combination

Orzo Salad with Grilled Chicken

Add marinated and grilled chicken strips to the orzo salad for a heartier dish. The smoky flavor of the chicken complements the freshness of the vegetables and feta.

Spinach and Artichoke Orzo Salad

Incorporate fresh spinach and artichoke hearts into the orzo salad for a unique twist. The combination adds depth and flavor, making it a satisfying meal.

Lemon Herb Orzo Salad

Enhance the existing recipe by adding zesty lemon juice and zest, along with a mix of fresh herbs like parsley and basil for an extra burst of freshness.

Mediterranean Orzo Salad with Roasted Vegetables

Roast a mix of seasonal vegetables, such as bell peppers, zucchini, and

eggplant, and toss them into the orzo salad for a warm, comforting version.

Orzo Salad with Shrimp

For seafood lovers, grilled or sautéed shrimp can be added to the salad. The lightness of the shrimp pairs beautifully with the salad's dressing and ingredients.

Orzo and Chickpea Salad

Add protein by stirring in some canned chickpeas. This variation makes the salad more filling and boosts its nutritional value while maintaining the delightful flavors.