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*A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul.*

August 2018

## THE HERB GARDEN

**Israeli Chick Peas and Rice**

**Kidney Bean and Tomato Salad with Fresh Herbs**

**Mediterranean Salad with Fresh Herbs**

**Tomato and Kale Salad with Fresh Herbs**

The pleasure of a garden comes only with work. Always there is reward but never more so than the flowers, leaves, roots, seeds, and the daily changing beauty and fragrance of the herb garden. As the years have passed the flower beds have become too much work for aged knees and hips and the ravaging of vegetable gardens on our open acreage became a hopeless battle of wills with those who were actually heir to this land and no doubt have assumed that we planted it all for them. Occasionally we will see evidence that a doe has secreted her fawn in the oregano to confuse the ability of a predator to detect her young during the night but generally the animals that relished our vegetables and tulips and lilies will cut a wide berth around our herb beds. Discussion is often given to natural insect control but few know how efficiently the choice of plantings can discourage or attract larger pests. We have used herbs as such discouragement in our flower beds. Flowering herbs, planted here and there, can add beauty to your flower beds while performing a surreptitious service.

Now, that the spring planting and the constant vigilance for insect intruders or hungry rabbits and ground hogs are pretty much behind me, the pleasure and reward really sink in. Although I have used my fresh-picked herbs and lettuces since June and judiciously dried jars full when the gardens were at their peaks, now comes the time when we must enthusiastically harvest for winter cooking. We are out there watering morning and night



to help our plants survive the summer heat. I suppose you might say, their health is our health. This is the time when I harvest blooms from the flowering herbs to dry for dry arrangements; a whiff of lavender in January that had come from just under the bedroom window reinforces our hope for a new growing season in those dark days at the far end of our planet's orbit around the sun.

There is almost no pleasure as satisfying as stepping out your back door to snip flavorful additions to a dish or to fill your salad bowl. The herb garden gives you a most intimate control of your food supply.



## ISRAELI CHICK PEAS AND RICE

TPT - 1 hour and 3 minutes

*Israel's developing cuisine is fascinating to study. Its complexity has evolved as its population has become more and more diverse and successful agricultural practices have delivered more to the market. I began to more clearly understand the complexity of the cuisine of my own land that is also the result of the enormous diversity. When you are born into such a diverse heritage and you are simultaneously flooded with prepared, convenience foods, you really do not see the whole picture, sort of like the three blind men trying to describe an elephant. Israel has given me insight into the why we eat what we eat right here in the United States. This vegetarian dish might be called just "beans and grain" by some but the choice of chickpeas and the seasoning say a great deal more about the travels of such a dish before it came to be part of this emerging cuisine. If you wish to eliminate the dairy element for a vegan meal, go right ahead since the beans and grain provide the necessary amino acid balance.*

*This can be made with just rice, white or brown, but I prefer to use a commercially available grain mixture consisting of wild rice, Wehani rice, and long grain brown rice.*



- 1 cup vegetarian stock of choice**
- 1/2 cup dry wild rice and rice pilaf mixture\***
  
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil**
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion**
  
- 1 garlic clove—very finely chopped**
  
- 3 tablespoons water**
- 1/2 can (7 1/2 ounces) chick peas (*garbanzos*)—drained, well-rinsed, seed coats removed, and drained again**
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley**
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon crushed, dried basil**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin**
- 1/2 teaspoon turmeric**
- Salt, to taste**
- Freshly ground mixed peppercorns—red, white, and black**  
—to taste

### Plain yogurt

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, bring vegetable stock to the boil. Add *pilaf* grains. Stir. Reduce heat to *LOW-MEDIUM* and allow to cook, undisturbed, for about 25 minutes. Add more stock only if necessary.

In a large skillet set over *MEDIUM* heat, heat oil. Add *finely* chopped onion and sauté until onion is soft and translucent, being careful not to allow onion to brown.

Add *very finely* chopped garlic and sauté for several more minutes.

Add water, *well-drained* chick peas, chopped parsley, *finely* chopped basil, ground cumin and turmeric, salt, and pepper. Stir to mix well. Add cooked *pilaf* and cover the skillet. Reduce heat to *LOW* and cook, stirring occasionally for about 20 minutes. Turn into a heated serving bowl and keep warm on a warming tray, if necessary.

Serve with yogurt.

Yields 4 servings  
adequate for 2 people  
as a main course

Notes: \*Several mail-order bulk food suppliers market interesting *pilaf* mixtures that are neither seasoned or salted which work well in this dish. If you are unable to obtain the *pilaf* mixture, cook the wild rice and rice separately and then proceed.

This recipe can be doubled when required, making it an excellent choice for a large gathering or as a contribution to a pot luck dinner.

1/4 SERVING (exclusive of yogurt) –  
PROTEIN = 4.7 g.; FAT = 5.8 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 29.4 g.;  
CALORIES = 158; CALORIES FROM FAT = 33%



## KIDNEY BEAN AND TOMATO SALAD WITH FRESH HERBS

TPT - 1 hour and 6 minutes;  
30 minutes = flavor development period

*Beans are an important protein builder for the vegetarian and the vegan. Now that low-sodium canned beans are readily available, I find myself infrequently using dried beans and the overnight soaking procedure I have used for years. Test canned products out first since several of the organic brands are too soft and mushy; you want firm beans for recipes like this. Opened cans of beans can mold quickly in the refrigerator. I, therefore, freeze canned beans in half-cup quantities since I rarely need a whole can of beans for a single recipe.*

**1/2 cup low-sodium, canned kidney beans**  
**1/2 cup chopped, well-drained fresh tomatoes**

**1/8 teaspoon herb vinegar, such as GARLIC-BASIL  
VINEGAR\***

**1 tablespoon calorie-reduced or light mayonnaise**  
**2 tablespoons slivered fresh herbs—basil, salad burnet,  
and parsley**  
**Freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

In a small mixing bowl, combine well-drained kidney beans and chopped tomatoes. Toss gently.

Sprinkle vinegar over. Add mayonnaise. Combine gently. Add herb chiffonade and black pepper. Combine gently. Turn into a serving bowl. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes to allow for flavor development.

*Serve chilled.*

Yields 2 servings  
adequate for 2 people

Notes: \*My recipe for GARLIC-BASIL VINEGAR can be found in *A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul*, vol. II, p. 678.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 3.8 g.; FAT = 2.9 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 11.9 g.;  
CALORIES = 90; CALORIES FROM FAT = 29%

## MEDITERRANEAN SALAD WITH FRESH HERBS

TPT - 1 hour and 6 minutes;  
1 hour = salad marination period

*Salad burnet (Poterium sanguisorba) is an easily grown herb of the rose family which has a fascinating cucumber taste, a beautiful fountain-like growing form, and graceful, serrated leaves. In dry, limestone soil and with full sun, it is an aggressive biennial which readily self-seeds. It actually does not do well in very rich soil and it does prefer low humidity. Pinch the flower heads which appear the second year to control its spreading and to prevent the leaves from becoming bitter. Encourage a new plant or two every few years since older plants do tend to become woody and lose their tender, fresh taste. Salad burnet is a wonderful addition to salads and cold drinks, greatly prized by Italian cooks who call it pimpinella. Combining this seldom-seen herb with basil, parsley, and mint gives this a very special herb-growers'*



*play on a classic salad, found in many cuisines in the eastern Mediterranean, a complexity that we enjoy very much when our herb gardens are at their peak. From the first gifts of the herb gardens well into September, this salad can make a meal very special.*

**1 large ripe tomato—chopped**  
**1/2 cucumber—peeled and cut into small dice**  
**1 small garlic clove—very finely chopped**  
**2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley**  
**2 tablespoons finely chopped salad burnet leaves,**  
**if available**  
**1 small, fresh basil leaf—finely chopped**  
**1 small fresh mint leaf—finely chopped**  
**2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil**  
**1 teaspoon MIXED FLOWER VINEGAR WITH**  
**OREGANO\* or herb vinegar of choice**  
**Salt, to taste**  
**Freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

**3 tablespoons crumbled feta cheese**

In a plastic container, combine chopped tomato, diced cucumber, very finely chopped garlic, finely chopped parsley, salad burnet, basil, and mint, oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper. Cover tightly and slosh back and forth to coat the ingredients well. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Turn into a serving bowl.

Scatter crumbled feta cheese over before serving.

Yields 4 servings  
adequate for 2 people

Notes: \*MIXED FLOWER VINEGAR WITH OREGANO is a delightful product of the herb garden adventure. A recipe can be found in *A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul*, vol. II, p. 679.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 2.1 g.; FAT = 4.0 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 2.7 g.;  
CALORIES = 58; CALORIES FROM FAT = 62%



## TOMATO AND KALE SALAD WITH FRESH HERBS

TPT - 1 hour and 5 minutes;  
1 hour = flavor development period

*A profitable family project is to select a canned tomato product to which everyone in your family can give a “thumbs up.” If I can taste summer in a spoonful; if I can drink the drained liquid with relish; if it tastes like my grandmother’s tomato stew, then it will taste good in my cooking. Before the tastier sun-ripened tomatoes are available, the gifts of the herb garden can convert that canned product into a very tasty salad providing a real nutritional wallop. Although presented here as a salad, it is a healthful side.*

**3/4 cup canned, diced tomatoes—well-drained**  
**1/2 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil**  
**1/4 teaspoon red wine vinegar**  
**3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh kale**  
**1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley**  
**1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh oregano**  
**1 lemon verbena leaf—finely chopped**  
**2 basil leaves—finely chopped**

**1/4 teaspoon sugar**  
**1/8 teaspoon HERBED ITALIAN SEASONING**  
**MIX (*Miscuglio di Erbas Italiano*)**  
[see recipe archive, May 2018]  
**1/8 teaspoon salt**  
**Freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

In a small bowl, combine *diced* tomatoes, olive oil, vinegar, and *finely* chopped kale, parsley, oregano, lemon verbena, and basil. Stir to mix well.

Add sugar, Italian seasoning mixture, salt, and black pepper. Stir to mix thoroughly. Divide between two small fruit dishes. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Serve chilled.

Yields 2 servings

Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 1.3 g.; FAT = 1.8 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 5.2 g.;  
CALORIES = 35; CALORIES FROM FAT = 46%



*Next month we will begin a three-month journey  
“from harvest to Thanksgiving.”  
Please join me as I try to smooth out the path  
to the family holidays.*

*Judy*

Please note that all food value calculations are approximate and not the result of chemical analysis.

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