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

August 2023

A QUINTET OF PASTA SALADS:

- Cold *Spaghettini* Salad with Lobster Mushrooms
- Curly Salad with Orange – Sesame Dressing
- Israeli *Couscous* Salad with Grape Tomatoes and *Gorgonzola* Cheese
- Pasta*, Swiss, and Apple Salad
- Warm *Tortellini* and Broccoli Salad



Where the classic Italian noodle, spaghetti, was invented is still questioned and argued but archeological evidence in China dates the noodle to between 25 AD and 220 AD, during the Early Han Dynasty. I remember reading about the astonishing discovery in China of an overturned bowl under which were found fossilized noodles, a find that moved the spaghetti dispute into a whole different historical prospective . . . for the time being, at least.

When you offer to bring a *pasta* salad to a party, a picnic, or an old-fashioned pot luck, is there just one recipe, that old macaroni salad, that comes to mind or are you challenged and subsequently explode with creativity? As trendy as *pasta* salad has become today, *pasta* is still the same flour, water, and salt it was when *pasta* was brought to the rest of Europe by the marching legions of Romans. Oh yes, eggs have been added to *pastas* in some cases, it is generally made by machine and not by hand, and new shapes have been created but all in all it is the same product.



A tossed salad with noodles or macaroni such as *conchiglie* (shells) or *fusilli* (twists) or *cavatappi* (double elbows) or *campanelle* (bells) could qualify or a classic *farfalle* (bow ties) or *orecchiette* (little ears) salad with fresh *mozzarella* and



fresh basil might be your choice; maybe a Japanese noodle salad. Varying the macaroni shapes or using spaghetti, *spaghettini*, *capelli d'angelo* (angel hair), *linguini*, etc. with different vegetables, different fruits, and different cheeses can quickly fill your *pasta* salad file with interesting possibilities. Dry *pasta* (*pasta secca*), fresh *pasta* (*pasta fresca*), homemade *pasta*, extruded or bronze cut *pasta*, and even *paste ripiene*, stuffed *pasta* like *tortellini* and *ravioli*, are candidates for a *pasta* salad bowl. Both Israeli *couscous* and *orzo* can make remarkable salads. The sky is, quite literally, the limit.



COLD SPAGHETTINI SALAD WITH LOBSTER MUSHROOMS

Insalata di Spaghettini con Funghi Aragosta

TPT - 2 hours and 16 minutes;
1 hour = mushroom soaking period;
1 hour = flavor development period



When we became vegetarians and when we became convinced that the fish and seafood from the oceans of our planet no longer were entirely safe to eat, we found that there were dishes we remembered fondly. Ray missed Sicilian sardine salad and I missed pasta with lobster. This dish, a summer favorite, is an attempt to capture those flavors in the form of a salad in the traditional style of Rome.

- 2 cups *boiling water*
- 3/4 cup (about 1 ounce) dried lobster fungi—brushed and well-rinsed
- 3 quarts *boiling water*
- 6 ounces *dry, high-protein, white spaghettini* (i. e., thin spaghetti but not angel hair)
- 1 1/2 tablespoons *extra virgin olive oil*
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Bragg amino acids*
- 1/4 cup sliced, pitted black olives
- 1/4 cup chopped fennel leaves (the fern-like greens)
- Pinch dried thyme—crushed
- Freshly ground mixed peppercorns—red, white, and black—to taste
- Dash or two ground red pepper (cayenne)
- 1 1/2 tablespoons grated *pecorino Romano* cheese



In a small bowl, soak mushrooms in the 2 cupfuls *boiling water* for 1 hour at room temperature, or until thoroughly rehydrated.** Put a dish into the bowl to hold the mushrooms under water until they have absorbed enough water for reconstitution and can be sliced. Drain mushrooms. Slice mushrooms into thin slices. Set aside briefly.

Heat the 3 quartfuls *boiling water* in a kettle set over *HIGH* heat. Break *spaghettini* in half and add to the *boiling water*. Cook according to package directions to the *al dente* stage. Drain and then, *immediately*, plunge into cold water. When cold, drain thoroughly. Turn into a serving bowl.

Add mushrooms, oil, Bragg amino acids, olive slices, chopped fennel leaves, crushed thyme, ground mixed peppercorns, and ground red pepper (cayenne). Toss well to distribute the oil and amino acids well.

Sprinkle grated *pecorino Romano* cheese over. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour to allow for flavor development.

Yields 4 servings

Notes: *I have found Bragg Liquid Aminos, a soy-based seasoning, to be not only a soy sauce alternative but a perfect vegetarian substitute for the ubiquitous fish sauces found throughout Southeast Asia. *Tamari* soy sauce may be substituted if you have not yet found a source of liquid aminos.

**You can save yourself time by soaking the lobster mushrooms overnight.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 6.3 g.; FAT = 7.2 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 31.3 g.;
CALORIES = 248; CALORIES FROM FAT = 26%

CURLY SALAD WITH ORANGE – SESAME DRESSING

TPT - 1 hour and 20 minutes;
1 hour = marination period

One day in the 1980s a flight of fancy took me and the idea for this fun salad hit. The more I thought about it, the more twists and turns I imagined. It really is fun and it is really delicious. It is a delightful boost to the spirit on a hot summer's day when appetites need a kick start.

ORANGE – SESAME DRESSING:

1 tablespoon sunflower oil
1/8 teaspoon sesame oil*
1 tablespoon *tamari* soy sauce*
1 tablespoon rice wine vinegar*
1 teaspoon undiluted *frozen* orange juice concentrate
—*thawed*
1 small garlic clove—*finely* chopped
1 tablespoon *finely* chopped fresh gingerroot
Pinch red pepper flakes



2 quarts *boiling* water
1/4 cup *dry, tiny* shell macaroni (*conchiglielle*)

2 ounces *dry* Japanese curly egg noodles (*chuka soba*)
or *dry* Chinese curly flour noodles (*mi dai chung*)*
1 cup *small* broccoli florets—well-rinsed and drained



1/4 cup curly-leaved parsley leaves
2 large red radishes—well-washed, trimmed, and sliced
into rounds
2 tablespoons *additive-free, unsalted* cashew halves—choose
the curliest and *lightly* toast

1/2 cup torn curly endive (chicory) leaves –well-rinsed and
well-dried
1/2 cup torn kale leaves—well-rinsed and well-dried



1 tablespoon salad burnet leaves—choose the curly top
leaves just as they are unfolding, for garnish**
Julienne-thin curls of *organic* orange zest, cut from
an orange using a vegetable peeler or a citrus zester
—for garnish
Petals from 2 *home-grown and unsprayed* daylilies
—well-rinsed—for garnish



In a cruet or jar, combine sunflower and sesame oils, soy sauce, vinegar, *thawed* orange juice concentrate, *finely* chopped garlic and gingerroot, and red pepper flakes. Shake vigorously and set salad dressing aside until required.

Cook shell macaroni in *boiling* water for 5 minutes. Add curly noodles and continue cooking for about 3 minutes more. Both shells and curly noodles should be *al dente*. Turn into a colander set over the sink. Rinse under *cold* running water to stop further cooking. Drain thoroughly, shaking gently to release any water trapped in the macaroni shells. Turn into a large mixing bowl. Add prepared dressing. Using salad forks, chopsticks, or your hands, mix salad dressing into the cooked macaroni, coating the noodles and shells well.

Add broccoli florets. Toss again. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour to allow flavors to develop. Toss and turn mixture occasionally to allow for even marination.

Remove noodle mixture from refrigerator. Toss again. Add parsley, radish slices, and *toasted* cashew halves. Toss to combine.

Line a serving bowl with curly endive (chicory) and kale pieces. Pile noodle and vegetable mixture into the center. Garnish with salad burnet leaves, curled orange zest strips, and daylily petals.

Serve at once.

Yields 2 main course servings

Notes: *These ingredients are available in Asian groceries, natural food stores, and, increasingly, in grocery stores. If *chuka soba* or *mi dai chung* are not available, *ramen* noodles or, even, fine spaghetti (*spaghettini* or *vermicelli*) may be substituted.

**Salad burnet (*Poterium sanguisorba*) is an easily-grown *bi-annual* herb member of the rose family whose leaves have a delightful cucumber taste. To keep the leaves from becoming bitter, pinch flower heads off as they appear. This also helps to keep the reseeding controlled. In chalky, limestone soil, its native environment, it reaches a height of about 5 inches. In richer, garden loam it will grow to a height of about 18 inches when in flower. Use the youngest leaves for the best flavor and encourage a new plant or two each year since older plants tend to become tough and bitter. Remember, it is a bi-annual.

***A shell-shaped serving bowl and individual, shell-shaped salad bowls add to the overall sense of “curliness,” if available.

This recipe may be doubled or halved, when required.



1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 11.5 g.; FAT = 17.0 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 44.4 g.;
CALORIES = 356; CALORIES FROM FAT = 43%

ISRAELI COUSCOUS SALAD WITH GRAPE TOMATOES AND GORGONZOLA CHEESE

TPT - 1 hour and 10 minutes;
15 minutes = *pasta* cooling period;
30 minutes = second chilling period

I've seen many references to marjoram (Oreganum hortensis, formerly classified as Oreganum marjorana) as a tender perennial. Well, our winters here in the center of Pennsylvania are not for the tender anything and our marjoram plants come back year after year and multiply with little regard for the weather—hot or cold. In England, oregano is often called wild marjoram and love it as we do in the appropriate recipe, marjoram is our preference because of its complex flavoring. It is sweet (accounting for the often-used name of sweet marjoram) and spicy with hints of a whole garden full of relatives. If you don't have a "hardy soldier" of a plant as we do, treat it as an annual and use it with abandon. It is the elegant, well-behaved herb with the enticing perfume. Just rub the leaves. If you decide to dry it, as we do, harvest the leaves just as the knots, the tightly rolled bracts which will open into small white flowers, appear (accounting for the alternative name, knotted marjoram). Known as restorer of peace, you will love how its peaceful mission unites the flavors in this salad into harmony.

Feta cheese may be substituted for gorgonzola, if preferred, and is really probably more appropriate to the Eastern Mediterranean, the cuisines of which inspired this salad.

CITRUS DRESSING WITH MARJORAM:

1 tablespoon *extra virgin* olive oil
1 1/2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 1/2 teaspoons freshly squeezed orange juice
3/4 teaspoon crushed, dried marjoram *or*
2 teaspoons fresh marjoram, *finely* chopped
1 teaspoons *Dijon* mustard with wine

3/4 cup dry Israeli *couscous**
1 3/4 cups *boiling* water
3 tablespoons crumbled *gorgonzola* cheese
2 tablespoons slivered red onion
1 tablespoon quartered, pitted *Kalamata* olives
2 teaspoon *organic* orange zest in long shreds
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

10 grape tomatoes—well-washed and halved

In a cruet, combine oil, lemon juice, orange juice, marjoram, and *Dijon* mustard. Shake vigorously and set aside until required.

In a saucepan, combine Israeli *couscous* and *boiling* water. Stir, cover, and allow to stand for about 15 minutes, or until *pasta* is soft. Drain thoroughly and return to the pan. Add *cold* water to cover. Allow to stand for an additional 15 minutes. Drain again, thoroughly. Turn into a mixing bowl.

Add crumbled *gorgonzola* cheese, slivered red onion, quartered olives, orange zest shreds, and black pepper. Toss to combine.

Shake prepared citrus *vinaigrette* vigorously and add to salad mixture. Toss *gently*. Chill in refrigerator, covered with plastic wrap, for 30 minutes.

When ready to serve, remove from refrigerator and add grape tomato halves. Toss *gently*.

Serve chilled.



Yields 2 main course servings

Notes: *Israeli *couscous*, *mughrabiye*, or pearl *couscous* is really a commercial version of the North African *pasta* product brought to Israel in the 1950s. It was introduced as an alternative for rice and was preferred by immigrants from North Africa and eastern Arab countries. Although rather a challenge to find, *moughrabiye* is well worth seeking out even if you have to mail order it from Israel. It is made from the same toasted *semolina* as is regular *couscous*, but the balls of *pasta* are larger. Palestinian *maftoul* is quite different. It is made from *bulgur* and flour, not from *semolina*.

This recipe is easily doubled or tripled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 12.5 g.; FAT = 10.9 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 46.1 g.;
CALORIES = 297; CALORIES FROM FAT = 33%

PASTA, SWISS, AND APPLE SALAD

TPT - 34 minutes

This salad compliments lots of menus but it does not just sit quietly by on the sidelines; it shares center stage well. The contrasting textures of the ingredients really activate salad forks.

1/2 cup dry pipette macaroni*
3 quarts boiling water

1/3 cup matchstick pieces of Swiss *Emmenthaler* cheese (about 2 ounces)—1 inch long
1 medium, firm, well-chilled apple—peeled, seeded, sliced into 1-inch matchstick pieces
[Honeycrisp, Delicious, Envy, and Mackintosh apples all deliver the crisp sweetness needed.]

3 tablespoons reduced-calorie or light mayonnaise
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
3/4 cup trimmed, well-washed, and well-dried baby spinach leaves
1/3 cup trimmed, well-washed and well-dried young arugula

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

In a large kettle set over *MEDIUM/HIGH* heat, cook macaroni in *boiling* water according to package directions. Plunge into ice water to cool quickly. Drain well.

In a mixing bowl, combine cooked and well-drained macaroni with cheese and apple matchsticks.

In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise and lemon juice. Using a small whisk, mix thoroughly. Add to ingredients in mixing bowl. Fold *gently*, but *thoroughly*.** Refrigerate until ready to serve but not more than 45 minutes.

Apportion spinach and *arugula* leaves among four salad plates. Divide *pasta* salad mixture among the salad plates, spooning it into the center of the greens. Grind black pepper over.

Serve at once.

Yields 4 individual servings

Notes: *I like to use the small pipette macaroni for this salad but other shapes can be substituted. You want to choose a shape that will contrast with the matchsticks pieces of cheese and apple and that is large enough to relay the soft mouthfeel that alerts the diner to textural contrasts.

**To prevent oxidation and browning, it is important to bring each piece of apple into contact with the acidulated mayonnaise.



This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 6.4 g.; FAT = 8.7 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 15.7 g.;
CALORIES = 189; CALORIES FROM FAT = 41%

WARM *TORTELLINI* AND BROCCOLI SALAD *Insalata di Tortellini e Broccoli*

TPT - 20 minutes

The intense green broccoli florets, the bits of red radicchio, and the purple onion rings topped with yellow lemon zest make this main course salad as pretty as it is delicious. Every mouthful is interesting to the taste buds. Served with a warm bread and a creamy lemon pudding, we think it is the perfect light dinner for a cool spring or early autumn evening.

1 tablespoon calorie-reduced or light mayonnaise
1 1/2 teaspoons herbed vinegar of choice*
1/2 teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

2 quarts boiling water
4 ounces dried, frozen, or fresh tortellini, of choice**

1 cup small broccoli florets

1/2 cup torn radicchio—well-washed and well-dried******
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

About 1/3 cup thinly sliced Italian red onion rings, for garnish

Long, thin shreds of lemon zest, for garnish

In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, vinegar, and lemon juice. Using a wire whisk, combine to form a smooth dressing. Set aside until required.

In a large saucepan set over *MEDIUM-HIGH* heat, combine *boiling water* and *tortellini*. Cook according to package directions.

Three minutes before the end of cooking period, add broccoli florets. Turn into a colander and drain thoroughly. Turn into a large mixing bowl.

Add *radicchio*. Toss. Season with black pepper. Add prepared dressing. Toss to coat well. Turn into heated serving bowl.

Serve at once, garnished with red onion rings and lemon zest shreds.

Yields 2 main-course servings



Notes: *Our choice for this salad is Garlic-Basil Vinegar. See *A World-wide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul, Volume II*, p. 678 for recipe.

**Dried, frozen, and fresh *tortellini* are available in most grocery stores. Choose the filling that you enjoy most.

***There are far more varieties of *radicchio* (Italian chicory) used in Tuscan cooking than we tend to find available in our markets, where tightly-leaved dark red heads of *Verona radicchio* are usually the only representative. *Treviso radicchio* is a milder variety with elongated leaves, looking rather like a large, blushing Belgian endive. A more recent variety *Castelfranco radicchio* is yellowish-green with red markings. Use the red *Verona radicchio* for this dish to add color.



A salad spinner is useful to dry the *radicchio* thoroughly.

This recipe may be doubled or halved, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 10.2 g.; FAT = 10.8 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 39.3 g.;
CALORIES = 297; CALORIES FROM FAT = 33%



*Next month, as we move into the beauty of autumn,
we also face the colder days ahead,
the return of our indoor world.
Pineapple can put a smile on your face
so let's try a few new pineapple recipes. Do drop by,*

Judy

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

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