Greek-Style Pasta Salad

Makes 8-10 servings

One of our favorite summer dishes, a classic Greek salad, shares all its great flavors with another favorite, pasta, in this garden-meets-grain salad. Choose a pasta that offers plenty of nooks and crannies for holding the finely diced vegetables along with the lemony vinaigrette dressing. It's a favorite at our house and bound to become a favorite at your home, too, all summer long!

Salad Ingredients:

1 lb pasta – (such as rotini)

Salt for boiling water

16 oz grape tomatoes, halved

1 cup pitted Kalamata olives, halved

1 large English cucumber, diced into 1/4-inch cubes

1 green pepper, diced into 1/4-inch pieces

1 small red onion, finely diced

1/4 cup fresh parsley, minced

1/2 cup sun-dried tomatoes, (oil pack), finely chopped

8 oz feta cheese, crumbled

2 cups arugula

Vinaigrette Ingredients:

1 teaspoon dried oregano

1/2 teaspoon dried thyme

1/2 teaspoon dried basil

3 cloves garlic, crushed

1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

1/2 cup olive oil

1/2 cup fresh lemon juice

1/4 cup white wine vinegar

1/2 teaspoon Kosher salt

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Directions:

(1) Wash the vegetables, pat dry. Cut the tomatoes and olives into halves, and the cucumber, green pepper, onion into a fine dice. Mince the parsley. Place all in a large bowl.

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- (2) Drain the oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes well, chop finely, add to the chopped vegetables. Crumble the feta cheese and set aside in a separate bowl. Wash the arugula, remove any large stems, also set aside in a separate bowl.
- (3) Mix all of the dressing ingredients together in deep measuring cup or bowl. Whisk vigorously until well-combined.
- (4) Bring 4 quarts of water to a boil in a large sauce pot. Add 1-1/2 tablespoons salt to the boiling water, then add the pasta. Boil the pasta until the pasta is al dente just "tender to the tooth." Drain the pasta well using a colander; transfer to a large bowl. While still warm, toss the pasta with the dressing. The warm pasta will absorb the wonderful dressing flavors. Allow the dressed pasta to cool (cooled pasta is important for the next step).
- (5) Add the prepared vegetables (tomatoes, olives, cucumber, green pepper, red onion, parsley), the sun-dried tomatoes, feta cheese, and arugula to the cooled pasta. Toss to combine. Store in the refrigerator until ready to serve.