

Chinese Noodle Salad with Asparagus

A tasty salad that will please a crowd and is great for any party or picnic.

This is an excellent salad to bring to parties and picnics. You double, triple or quadruple this recipe. The original recipe called for eggplant but I have almost always used fresh asparagus. For this salad I also added pistachio nuts and radishes. The marinade can be made a couple of days ahead and can be used for a week. The flavors improve overnight. I cooked the noodles a day ahead and mixed them with some of the dressing. I made sure that the noodles were well coated with the dressing so that they did not stick together. I used my hands. The flavors will develop as the noodles sit. I blanched all the vegetables on the day of the event. Make sure all the veggies are still crisp and not overcooked . Less is better.

Ingredients

Serves 4-6

14 ounces of fresh Chinese egg noodles, preferably the thinnest available

The Marinade

7 TBS dark sesame oil
7 TBS soy sauce
3 TBS balsamic vinegar
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3 TBS sugar
2 ½ tsp salt
1 TBS red pepper oil
8-10 scallions, the site pus some of the firm greens, thinly sliced into rounds
1 TBS fresh ginger, peeled and minced
1 clove of garlic, finely chopped
3 TBS cilantro chopped

The Vegetables

1 pound or more asparagus
½ pound mung bean sprouts (optional)
1 cup snow peas, strings removed
1 to 2 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced on the diagonal
3 TBS sesame seeds
a handful of radishes , thinly sliced and then slivered
¼ cup toasted pistachios, cashews, or roasted peanuts (optional)
cilantro leaves for garnish

Directions

The Marinade and Noodles

Combine the first seven ingredients in a bowl, and stir them together until the sugar is dissolved. Add the rest of the ingredients and store in a jar with a lid. I keep mine in a mason jar so I can shake the marinade before using. The marinade will keep in the fridge for several days.

Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil. While the water is heating, gently pull apart the strands of noodles with your fingers, loosening them and fluffing them as you do so. Add the noodles to the boiling water and give them a quick stir. Cook them briefly, a few minutes at most. Immediately pour them in a colander and rinse them in cold water. Shake the colander vigorously to get rid of as much water as possible. Put the noodles in a bowl, stir your marinade and add about one third or more to the noodles. Spread the noodles on a baking sheet and toss them with your hands to prevent any sticking. If you want to refrigerate the noodles put them back in the bowl and cover them with plastic wrap. Allow them to come to room temperature before adding the vegetables.

The Vegetables

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Blanch the snow peas until they are bright green, no more than 30 seconds. Immediately remove them with a strainer and put them in ice water. Let them dry on a towel and cut them into diagonal strips. Blanch the sprouts in the same water for 30 seconds, rinse them in cold water and spread out to dry on a paper towel.

Break off the tough ends of the asparagus and blanch the stalks in boiling water for a few minutes (do not overcook them). Put the drained asparagus in ice water and spread out on the kitchen counter to prevent any further cooking. Cut the cooled asparagus into serving sizes.

Roast the sesame seeds in a cast iron frying pan until they are lightly colored and smell toasty.

Assembling the salad

Carefully toss the salad using most of the vegetables with more marinade. Leave some of the veggies to decorate. Sprinkle the salad with cilantro leaves and sesame seeds.

Recipe from the

Greens Cookbook by Deborah Madison and Edward Espe Brown

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