

Chickpea, Barley and Zucchini Ribbon Salad with Mint and Feta

Makes 2 servings as a main dish, 4 servings as a side dish

2 medium zucchini

3/4 teaspoon salt, divided, plus more for salting water

1/3 cup pearl barley 1 teaspoon lemon juice

1 teaspoon white wine vinegar

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

2 cups (or 1 15-ounce can) chickpeas, drained

2 tablespoons fresh mint, finely chopped

2 tablespoons feta cheese

Freshly ground pepper

Trim the ends of the zucchini and cut in half crosswise. Using a mandolin or a knife, cut the zucchini into thin matchsticks and place in a colander in the sink. Sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon salt and massage lightly with your hands to evenly disperse the salt. Let sit for 20-30 minutes, or as long as it takes to prepare the rest of the salad. Bring a medium pot of water to a boil. Salt the water and add the barley. Cook, stirring occasionally, until barley is cooked through but still pleasantly chewy, about 15-20 minutes. Drain and set aside. Meanwhile, make the dressing. In a small bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, vinegar and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt. Slowly whisk in the olive oil and set aside. In a large bowl, combine the chickpeas, barley and about half of the dressing. If the barley is still very hot, let the mixture sit until just warm, stirring occasionally. Squeeze the zucchini gently to get rid of any excess moisture and add to the bowl, along with the remaining dressing and the mint. Stir and transfer to a serving bowl. Crumble the feta over the top and serve.

Additional Notes: Warm beans absorb dressing better. The chickpeas can either be warmed in the microwave or in a small pan on the stove before being tossed with the dressing, but if you're gripped by summer cooking laziness, feel free to skip this step; the salad will still be good. The salad can be made several hours ahead and refrigerated. Longer than that and the texture of the zucchini becomes a bit soggy.