

Farmers Market Pasta Salad

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It's farmers market season! This is prime time for trying recipes that call for fresh fruits and vegetables. They are bound to taste best when produce is picked up directly from your local farmer or farmers market. Recipes like this one are great for quiet evenings with the family, or when your backyard is full of guests. Minnesota Grown tomatoes, zucchini and sweet corn are all coming into season this month and make this a local treat you will return to time after time. Don't forget to find your ingredients at one of 180+ Minnesota Grown farmers markets for the best flavor! Happy Eating!

Cook the pasta al dente (1 or 2 minutes shorter than package directions specify) so it holds its shape when tossed with the vegetables and vinaigrette. Also great with substitutions, the salad is delicious with cheese-filled tortellini. Make it your own with varied vegetable substitutions or additions!

Yield: 8-10 servings

Ingredients

2 cups halved baby heirloom tomatoes
2 small zucchini, thinly sliced into half moons
1 small red bell pepper, cut into thin strips
1 cup fresh corn kernels
1 cup diced firm, ripe peaches (about 2 medium)
½ cup thinly sliced green onions
Parmesan Vinaigrette
1 (8 oz.) package penne pasta*
2 cups shredded smoked chicken (about 10 oz.)
1/3 cup torn fresh basil
1/3 cup torn fresh cilantro

* 1 (20 oz.) package refrigerated cheese-filled tortellini may be substituted

To Prepare

1. Toss together first 7 ingredients in a large bowl, and let stand 10 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, prepare pasta according to package directions. Add hot cooked pasta and chicken to tomato mixture; toss gently to coat.

3. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a serving platter, and top with basil and cilantro.

Parmesan Vinaigrette

Ingredients

- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 teaspoons lemon zest
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 garlic cloves
- 2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon table salt
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

To Prepare

Process Parmesan cheese, olive oil, lemon zest, lemon juice, balsamic vinegar, garlic, pepper, and salt in a blender or food processor until smooth. Add basil and cilantro; pulse 5 or 6 times or just until blended.

Enjoy!

Photo and recipe courtesy of my recipes.

<http://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/farmers-market-pasta-salad#>

For more great ways to incorporate produce from Minnesota Grown farmers markets into your diet, [click here!](#)



Photos courtesy of Southern Living Magazine