

Israeli Couscous Salad

6-8 servings

- 1 cup uncooked Israeli (pearl) couscous (GF-make rice)
- 1 1/4 cups boiling water
- Olive oil
- Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper
- 2 English cucumbers, diced
- 3 small tomatoes, seeded and diced (cut in half and squeeze seeds out; chop rest)
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley, reserve a bit for garnish
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano
- 1 yellow bell pepper, diced
- 4 green onions, minced (green and white parts)
- 3 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1/3 cup chopped feta cheese, reserve a bit for garnish
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon peel
- Juice of one lemon (about 2 tablespoons)
- Crushed red pepper

COOK COUSCOUS: Into a medium pan, pour the boiling water over the Israeli (or pearl) couscous and bring to a boil. Lower heat, cover, and simmer about eight minutes or until tender. Drizzle with a bit of olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Leave uncovered and set aside to cool a bit.

STIR THE VEGETABLES AND COUSCOUS TOGETHER:

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, stir together the cucumbers, tomatoes, fresh herbs, peppers, onions, garlic, feta, and lemon peel. Add the couscous and mix.

ADD LEMON JUICE, OLIVE OIL, AND SPICES: Drizzle lemon juice over everything, season well with a generous pinch crushed red pepper, kosher salt and pepper, and stir well. (Begin with about 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon

of pepper and add more if needed.) Drizzle with about 3 tablespoons olive oil and mix thoroughly. Taste, re-season, and serve at room temperature. Good cold for the next day or two for a leftover lunch.

Cook's Notes: Leave out feta for vegan version. Use rice instead of couscous for GF.

ADD GRILLED TUNA? To quickly grill tuna, heat stove-top grill or heavy skillet over high heat. Firmly place canola oiled, salted and peppered tuna fillets in hot pan and cook for 2-3 minutes on one side. Turn and cook another 2-3 minutes on the other side. They should still be quite pink in the center. Let them rest a few minutes and then slice thinly at an angle. 4 ounces of fish, along with a big serving of the salad should be plenty for each person.

WINE: I liked an Oregon chardonnay with this; it stood up to the tuna. Try [Chehelam](#) or [Bethel Heights](#). If you make your salad quite spicy, see about an off-dry Riesling (the higher the alcohol %, the drier the Riesling-) from Washington, New York, or Germany.

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