

# MEDITERRANEAN CHOPPED TUNA SALAD

serves 4

***Do note before beginning***, there are ingredients that must be cooked: hard-cooked eggs, sautéed or steamed asparagus, toasted sliced almonds. You might want to do these first. Change this up to suit your fancy or pantry. Brown rice instead of beans. Green beans rather than asparagus. Skip the feta if you're not doing dairy. Not an olive lover? Switch to sautéed mushrooms and a few capers or sliced pepperoncinis for that piquant kick.

- 2 5-ounce cans Italian or good quality wild-caught tuna in olive oil, drained
- 1/4 cup chopped red onion
- 1 small fennel bulb, cored and diced (can sub cucumber)
- 2 stalks celery with leaves, trimmed and diced
- 12 asparagus spears, trimmed, cut into 1/2-inch pieces, cooked (steam or sauté)
- 1/2 cup diced red and/or yellow bell peppers
- 1/2 cup pitted kalamata olives—chop half and reserve the other half for garnish
- 15-ounce can cannellini beans (white kidney beans), drained and rinsed (can sub any canned white bean)
- 1 cup chopped canned artichoke hearts (1/2 a 15-ounce can, drained)
- 1/3 cup toasted sliced almonds—add half to salad and reserve the other half for garnish
- 2 ounces Feta cheese, diced (about 1/2 cup)
- 1/4 teaspoon each kosher salt and fresh ground pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 lemon
- 6-7 tablespoons vinaigrette (recipe below)
- 4 cups chopped Romaine lettuce (about a head with the core and outer leaves removed)
- 4 hard-cooked eggs, peeled and halved
- 4 small ripe tomatoes, halved

**1. STIR TOGETHER THE MAIN INGREDIENTS:** In a large

bowl, flake tuna with a fork just a little until broken up into big pieces. Add onion, fennel, celery, asparagus, bell peppers, half of the kalamata olives, the cannellini beans, artichoke hearts, half of the toasted almonds, and feta cheese.

**2. ADD THE SEASONINGS, DRESSING, AND MIX:** Sprinkle with salt, peppers, and oregano. Toss carefully and briefly; you want the salad barely mixed so you can still see each ingredient. Squeeze the half lemon over all. Drizzle on vinaigrette and toss gently, but thoroughly. Taste and adjust seasonings.

**3. SERVE ON LETTUCE WITH GARNISHES:** To each of four shallow bowls add a cup of Romaine and top with about a quarter of the chopped tuna salad. Garnish with reserved olives and toasted almonds. Add a halved egg and a halved tomato to each bowl. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

**Make ahead:** Up to 1 day ahead, complete steps 1 and 2. Store tightly covered in the refrigerator. Just before serving, continue on to step 3 and serve immediately.

### **Vinaigrette**

- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Pinch each kosher salt and fresh ground pepper
- 2 teaspoons Dijon-style mustard
- 2 tablespoons good-quality red wine vinegar (I like Fini)
- 4 tablespoons good-quality extra virgin olive oil (I like Olio Santo or California Olive Ranch)

In a 1-cup measuring cup, mix garlic, salt, pepper, mustard, and red wine vinegar. Let sit 2 or 3 minutes. Whisk in olive oil slowly until emulsified. Taste and adjust seasonings.

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