

Italian Flat Green Beans with Tomatoes and Garlic

Submitted by Cheryl Kastanowski

Ingredients:

1 lb green beans, cut on the diagonal into 3-inch pieces (Italian flat, Romano)
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
3 medium garlic cloves, cut into very thin slices (a 1/4 cup)
1 tomato, cut into 1/2-inch dice (8ounces)
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper, freshly ground
6 -8 basil leaves, cut into chiffonade (stacked, then rolled tightly and cut into very thin strips, optional garnish)

Directions:

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the green beans and cook for 5 to 7 minutes, until tender. Drain immediately. While the beans are cooking, heat the oil in a medium sauté pan or skillet over medium-high heat until the oil shimmers. Add the garlic slices, distributing them evenly. Cook for 4 to 5 minutes, until the slices become almost translucent and start to brown on the edges; be careful not to let the garlic burn. Add the diced tomato and salt and pepper to taste, then reduce the heat to medium. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, so that the tomato is heated through. Add the cooked green beans and heat through for 1 to 2 minutes; mix well. Taste and adjust seasoning as needed. Transfer to a serving dish and top with the basil, if desired. Serve warm or at room temperature.

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Fresh Corn Salsa

Submitted by Cheryl Kastanowski

Ingredients:

4 sweet corn ears
4 tomatoes medium sized – seeded and diced
1 onion medium sized – diced
3 jalapeños – seeded and diced fine

1 lime – juiced
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
2 teaspoons salt
1/4 cup cilantro – fresh and chopped

Directions:

Husk and boil the sweet corn until desired doneness. You could also grill the sweetcorn if you prefer.

When the corn is done, set aside to allow it to cool.

Dice the tomatoes, onions and jalapenos and place them in a mixing bowl.

Cut the corn from the ears and add it into the mixing bowl.

Add in the juice from one lime, salt and garlic powder.

Chop the cilantro and mix all together.

Can be served immediately or covered and refrigerated until ready to use.

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Roasted Eggplant and Pepper Salad

Submitted by apprentice Cheryl Kastanowski

Ingredients:

For the salad:

Nonstick vegetable oil spray

2 eggplants (about 2 1/2 pounds total), cut into 3 x 3/4 x 3/4-inch strips

2 large green bell peppers, cut into 1/2-inch wide strips

2 large red bell peppers, cut into 1/2-inch wide strips

Dressing:

8 large garlic cloves (unpeeled)

1/2 cup olive oil

3/4 cup red wine vinegar

1 tablespoon ground cumin

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

1 1/2 teaspoons pepper
3/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper

For the sesame spread:

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
2/3 cup toasted sesame seeds
1 teaspoon salt

8 warm pita bread rounds, cut into wedges

Directions:

To make the salad: Place rack in top third of oven and preheat to 450°F. Spray large heavy baking sheet with nonstick vegetable oil spray. Combine eggplant, peppers, garlic and oil in large bowl. Toss well. Transfer to prepared sheet. Bake until eggplant is brown and vegetables are tender, stirring every 10 minutes, about 50 minutes. Remove garlic and reserve. Scrape vegetables and all pan juices into bowl.

To make the dressing: Combine vinegar, cumin, salt, pepper and cayenne in processor. Peel roasted garlic; add to processor. Puree until smooth.

Toss vegetable mixture with 1/4 cup garlic dressing. Cool, tossing occasionally. (Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill vegetables and remaining dressing separately. Bring to room temperature.)

Mound salad in center of large platter. Surround with pita wedges. Serve, passing remaining dressing and Sesame Spread separately.

To make the sesame spread: Beat butter, sesame seeds and salt to blend in small bowl. (Can be prepared 2 days ahead. Cover and refrigerate. Bring to room temperature before serving.)

Yield: 8 servings