

Mexican-style Orzo Salad

From Cousin Julie

Serves 12-15

This colorful and tasty salad is great for picnics and potluck suppers.

INGREDIENTS

8 oz. orzo pasta
1 chopped red bell pepper
1 bunch scallions (green onions), chopped
1 large cucumber, peeled and chopped
1 c. cooked yellow corn
 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. pimento-stuffed green olives, sliced
1 - 15-oz. can black beans, rinsed and drained
2 T. lemon juice
2 T. sherry vinegar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ c. vegetable oil
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ t. cumin
 $\frac{1}{2}$ t. dried oregano
Salt and pepper to taste
 $\frac{1}{4}$ c. chopped cilantro

DIRECTIONS

Cook **orzo** according to package directions. Drain and rinse under cold water to stop the cooking process. Mix orzo with **red pepper, scallions, cucumber, corn, olives** and **black beans**.

Whisk together **lemon juice, sherry vinegar, cumin, oregano, salt** and **pepper**. Slowly add **oil**.

Pour dressing over orzo mixture and toss. Add **cilantro** and toss.

WHOLE GRAIN VARIATION

You can substitute **8 oz. barley** for the orzo, if you have time to cook it.

Bring 2 cups water to the boil, add **1 t. salt**, and add the barley. Cook over low heat for about 45 minutes, covered, until the barley is tender and chewy. If there is some water left in the pan, drain it off. Let the barley cool before adding to the salad mixture.