



Mangia Bene, Viva Bene

By FRANK ZEOLI



Cucumber & Tomato Salad

The best part of this time of year is the homegrown vegetables. Whether grown in your back yard, purchased at a farm stand or even freshly picked at a farm, homegrown vegetables are the best. The tomatoes are sweet, cucumbers have a crunch and the basil... wow, what can I say about the basil, that smell; it is the smell of my childhood. Almost every night in August and September, my grandmother would include a cucumber and tomato salad with dinner. Her recipe is fairly easy, but it is so good.



Prep Time: 5 minutes

Ingredients

- 3 homegrown plum tomatoes (any type of tomatoes will do)
- 2 homegrown cucumbers
- 1/2 of a medium size red onion
- 10-12 fresh basil leaves (you can never have too many)
- 3/4 cup of red wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 tablespoon of dried oregano

Instructions

1. Remove the skin from the cucumbers, core the tomatoes, and slice the tomatoes first in half and then in four strips. Cut the cucumbers into slices. Cut the onions into medium sized julienne strips.
2. In a large mixing bowl, add the cut cucumbers, tomatoes, and onions. Add the basil by ripping it into pieces. If you cut it, it loses flavor. Add the salt and dried oregano.
3. Add the vinegar and give it a good mix. Then add the olive oil and mix it again. Let it sit for about 15 minutes to let all the flavors meld together. Taste it and adjust the salt as needed.

Serve it with a piece of crusty Italian bread for dipping in the dressing when you're finished.



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