

Mediterranean Pasta Salad

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Ingredients

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup good quality extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons chopped garlic (3-4 medium cloves)
2 tablespoons fresh oregano
1 teaspoon Kosher salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (about one large lemon)
12 ounces dry Ditalini (or your favorite pasta)
Zest from one lemon
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pitted Kalamata olives sliced in half
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grape tomatoes cut in half
1 tablespoon fresh mint, leaves rolled and sliced (chiffonade)
2 tablespoons fresh basil, leaves rolled and sliced (chiffonade)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup red onions chopped
1 cup diced green bell pepper (about one medium pepper)
1 14-ounce can artichoke hearts drained, stems left on and quartered the long way
8 ounces crumbled feta cheese

Directions

In a medium sauté pan over a low flame, add oil, garlic, oregano, salt and pepper and cook slowly for about 8 minutes or until the garlic just begins to brown.

Remove from heat and add the lemon juice. Set this mixture aside.

Start cooking the pasta per the box directions but cook just slightly under cooked.

While the pasta is cooking, start preparing the remaining ingredients.

When the pasta is just a little under done, remove to a colander and drain but do not rinse.

Place cooked drained hot pasta in a large bowl and add the flavored oil and lemon juice mixture. Stir and let sit at room temperature for a few minutes.

Add all other prepared ingredients except feta and stir. Refrigerate until chilled then stir in the feta and serve.