
Orzo, Pancetta, Feta & Greens with a Basil Lemon Vinaigrette

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Servings: 8

1. **VINAIGRETTE:** In a medium bowl, whisk the mustard and lemon zest and juice. Slowly add the olive oil in a steady stream, whisking constantly until emulsified. Season with salt and pepper. Stir in basil; set aside.
2. **SALAD:** In a medium saute pan over medium heat, heat 2 T olive oil; add pancetta and cook until brown and crispy. Using a slotted spoon, remove the cooked pancetta and drain on a paper towel lined plate. Allow to drain and then place in a large bowl. Set aside.
3. Place pan back on heat and add 1-2 T more olive oil (if necessary - you need about 2 T in the pan to cook the onions) and saute the onions until soft, 4-6 minutes. Add garlic and cook an additional 1-2 minutes. Add to bowl with pancetta; set aside.
4. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add one teaspoon salt, add orzo and cook as per package instructions. Drain the orzo and place in the bowl with pancetta and onion mixture. Add spinach. Toss with the hot pasta. Add most of the vinaigrette (add it all if desired) and continue tossing until the spinach has wilted. Add feta cheese and walnuts; toss until combined. Season with salt and pepper. Serve warm or at room temperature. If you make it ahead a few hours, the salad may need additional dressing and/or salt and pepper. May garnish with more Feta on top, if desired.

BASIL LEMON VINAIGRETTE:

- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon fresh basil, cut in chiffonade
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

SALAD:

- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup pancetta, diced
- 1 medium red onion, finely diced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 pound orzo
- 4 cups baby spinach, roughly chopped
- 1 cup walnuts, toasted
- 8 ounces Feta cheese, crumbled

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 630 Calories; 39g Fat (54.4% calories from fat); 24g Protein; 49g Carbohydrate; 3g Dietary Fiber; 45mg Cholesterol; 1121mg Sodium. Exchanges: 3 Grain(Starch); 2 Lean Meat; 1/2 Vegetable; 0 Fruit; 6 1/2 Fat; 0 Other Carbohydrates.

Carolyn T's Blog: tastingspoons.com