

# Green Panzanella, Chicken and Pasta Salad

My own recipe, 6/2011



Use ciabatta, or some kind of holey type bread for the croutons.

4 cups bread cubes, cut about 1/2 inch square

2 tablespoons grapeseed oil

2 teaspoons seasoned garlic salt

2 ounces pasta, penne, penette, penne rigate or bowties

2 tablespoons lemon juice

3 ounces baby spinach, or Romaine lettuce

1 1/2 cups cooked chicken, cut in slivers or cubes

1 cup asparagus, steamed, chopped [optional]

1/4 cup pesto sauce

1/4 cup heavy cream

1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, halved

salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

*Serving Ideas: If you have some frozen peas on hand, add in a handful of them also. They go great with a spinach enhanced salad, and they taste great with the pesto too.*

## Servings: 3

1. Make croutons: preheat oven to 425°. Cut 2/3 of a small ciabatta loaf into cubes and place in a large bowl, then drizzle the oil over the bread, toss with your hands, then add the seasoned garlic salt (the oil will help the salt to stick). Pour cubes onto a large, rimmed baking sheet and bake for about 5-7 minutes until the croutons are golden brown. Remove and set aside.
2. PASTA: cook the pasta of your choice until it's al dente. Drain and place in the same bowl you used for the croutons. Add the lemon juice and toss gently and allow the pasta to cool. Set aside.
3. Mix the pesto and heavy cream together. Add the spinach, chicken, asparagus and cherry tomatoes to the salad bowl. Pour the croutons over the top and add the pesto cream. Toss the pesto mostly in the bread cubes at first. You may not need all of the dressing - add some, then taste. It's easy to over-do it, so add and toss, then taste to make sure. Add salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste.

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Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 623 Calories; 32g Fat (45.6% calories from fat); 35g Protein; 50g Carbohydrate; 4g Dietary Fiber; 92mg Cholesterol; 571mg Sodium. Exchanges: 3 Grain(Starch); 3 1/2 Lean Meat; 1 Vegetable; 0 Fruit; 0 Non-Fat Milk; 5 1/2 Fat; 0 Other Carbohydrates.

Carolyn T's Blog - Tasting Spoons:  
<http://tastingspoons.com>