

BASIL GREEN BEAN SALAD WITH NEW POTATOES

serves 4

Happened to have leftover bacon and toasted walnuts and threw them in; leave them out if you don't have them. LEFTOVER HINT: I took the leftovers from this and stirred in sliced kalamata olives and chopped fresh mozzarella along with a few more tomatoes for the next day's lunch.

VEGANS: Skip the bacon and added cheese in leftover versions. VEGETARIANS: Skip bacon and make sure use fresh mozzarella for leftover version.

- Kosher salt, fresh ground pepper, and crushed red pepper
- Fresh basil--6 leaves and stem
- 1 pound (about 10) small new white or red potatoes, cut in half
- 1 large shallot, minced
- Extra virgin olive oil
- 1 pound fresh green beans, trimmed
- 1 piece very crispy bacon, crumbled -- optional
- 2 tablespoons toasted walnuts, chopped -- optional
- 1 1/2 tablespoons red wine vinegar (or to taste)
- 1 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard
- 6 sliced cherry tomatoes, garnish

COOK POTATOES: Fill an eight or ten-quart pot 3/4 full of water and add 1/2 teaspoon each salt and pepper, along with a pinch of crushed red pepper and the stem from the basil. Cover; bring to boil. Add potatoes and cook until tender, 5 - 10 minutes. Meanwhile, chop the basil leaves and set aside for a moment. When potatoes are tender, using a spider or spatula, remove them to a large mixing bowl leaving hot water in pot to cook green beans. Add shallots and chopped basil to the potatoes in the bowl and season with a good pinch of salt and pepper and a drizzle of olive oil; stir and set aside.

COOK GREEN BEANS IN THE SAME WATER: Add green beans to the pot of water and cook until tender, 4 - 5 minutes. (Depends on how thick your beans and how old they are, as well as where you live. Here at altitude, it probably takes me a couple of minutes longer.) Drain well.

STIR IT ALL TOGETHER, RESEASON, AND SERVE: Add beans to the mixing bowl with the potato mixture; sprinkle with salt and pepper and a tiny bit of crushed red pepper. Stir gently, but well. Add bacon, walnuts, red wine vinegar, Dijon-style mustard and 2 *more* tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Stir gently and well once more and taste. Adjust seasonings, including salt, pepper, vinegar, and oil. Tip onto a serving platter or bowl. Top with sliced cherry tomatoes. Serve hot, warm, at room temperature, or cold.

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