



French Bean Summer Salad

Nettle & mint yoghurt dressing

A summery salad combining garden herbs, a German inspired salad dressing and delicious French beans. A great salad for summer barbeques, lunches or simply as a starter. Just remember to use rubber gloves whilst handling the nettles, but if you do get a sting, then dab the area with sticky tape to remove the sting, squeeze on some lemon juice.

Ingredients:

7 nettle-top sprigs, the top three bracts
350g French beans, topped and tailed
Sea salt to season
60g fresh summer spearmint leaves, roughly chopped
3 lemons, freshly squeezed juice
2 tbsp grape seed oil
1 tsp white peppercorns, freshly ground
1 tsp cumin seeds, freshly ground
150g yoghurt, full fat, strained (Greek yoghurt is good and you can use low fat if you'd prefer)
1 tblsp almonds, lightly toasted, roughly chopped
A splash of fruity virgin olive oil

Method:

1. Firstly, pluck the nettle tops gingerly from countryside hedgerows, or your garden borders, rinse to clean, pop them into gently boiling water to blanch for about 3 minutes then plunge into ice-cold water. When cool, about 5 minutes, strain, squeeze dry, roughly chop and set aside.
2. Using the same pot of water, add about 3 tsp of salt, pop in the beans and cook until they're soft, but still hold a little shape, remove from the pot, then plunge into ice-cold water, set aside and leave to cool
3. Pop the nettles, mint, lemon juice, oil, 1 teaspoon of salt, the pepper and cumin into a food processor and blitz to a paste
4. In a small bowl, add the paste, the yoghurt and stir together, check and rectify seasoning.
5. Remove the beans from the water, pat dry and lay them on a serving platter, spoon over the dressing, scatter the nuts, splash over a little olive oil and serve.

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