

Salad Nicoise (Vegetable, Tuna, Egg, Anchovy, and Olive Salad)

This is the ultimate salad -- a feast eaten only in the spring or summer when tender fresh vegetables are ripe and abundant. There are many adulterations of this salad. some of which use meat, leftovers, and potatoes. - but there is only one classic salade nicoise, and its ingredients are listed below. Use the freshest raw vegetables, never frozen or canned. Serves 6.

Ingredients:

6 Firm half ripe tomatoes
1 Cucumber, peeled and sliced
1 Head of Boston lettuce, or 3 heads of Bibb lettuce, each leaf cut in half
1/2 lb. Green beans, (lima beans)
6 Small purple artichokes, quartered
1 Fennel bulb, sliced in 1/4-inch strips
2 Green peppers (Italian preferably), seeded and sliced
6 Small white onions, or half a Spanish onion, thinly sliced 1 Handful of white or red radishes with stems 3 Hard-boiled eggs, cut in half lengthwise. 10 Anchovy fillets, cut in thirds 8 oz. Can of tuna in oil
1 Handful of small black olives, unpitted, or oil-cured big black olives, pitted
6 to 12 Chapons – stale bread rubbed w/ garlic 1 – 1 1/2”
3/4 C Olive oil
1/4 C Red wine vinegar
TT Salt
TT Freshly ground pepper
10 Leaves of fresh basil or mint, chopped 2 Garlic cloves, peeled and crushed

Preparation:

Wash and quarter the tomatoes (do not peel them), salt lightly and let them drain upside down on a board for 10 minutes. Peel and slice the cucumber, drain on a paper towel for 10 minutes. Prepare the other vegetables and the eggs, anchovy fillets, and olives. Prepare the chapons. To make the vinaigrette, mix the oil and the vinegar, season to taste with salt and pepper, and add the garlic and basil or mint. Arrange the vegetables, eggs, anchovy fillets, and olives attractively on a shallow dish and surround with lettuce leaves and chapons. Pour the vinaigrette over everything and bring the dish to the table without stirring it. Just before serving individual portions, toss delicately but thoroughly.