

PENNE, SPINACH, ASPARAGUS and CASHEW SALAD

Adapted from Bon Appetit, June 1997

Beth's notes: This recipe is easily reduced in size, as the full recipe makes quite a lot. This is an excellent FOUNDATION RECIPE; you can adapt it to vegetables available in any season. It's fine to prepare a double batch of dressing and freeze half for another time. I suggest that you use just the pale green stems of the green garlic when preparing this dressing.

1-1/2 pounds penne or rigatoni pasta

1 tablespoon plus 1/4 cup olive oil

3/4 cup sliced scallions (or 1/2 cup sliced green garlic)

6 tablespoons white wine vinegar

2 tablespoons soy sauce

1-1/2 pounds cooked asparagus spears, cut in 1-in pieces

6 ounces spinach

1 cup (about 4 ounces) roasted cashews

crumbled feta cheese

Optional ingredients to replace asparagus and spinach when out of season:

sliced radishes, sliced salad turnips, shredded carrots, chopped cucumbers, snap peas, grilled zucchini, sliced cherry tomatoes, shredded Beauty Heart radish

1. Cook pasta until just tender but still firm to bite. Drain. Quickly transfer the hot pasta to very large bowl and toss with the spinach to wilt it a bit. Toss with 1 tablespoon olive oil. Cool.

2. In a blender, blend 1/4 cup oil, green onions, vinegar and soy sauce until smooth, about 2 minutes. (Asparagus, pasta and dressing can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover separately; chill.) Pour dressing over pasta. Add asparagus and cashews; toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper and adjust vinegar to taste. Crumble feta over the salad and serve. Makes 12 Servings.