

Ham or Shrimp Macaroni Salad

5–6 C of cooked drained macaroni
1-1/2 C cubed, cooked ham or 2 small cans small salad shrimp, drained
7 hardboiled eggs, cut up
1 C chopped onion, white, red or green
1/2 of 16 oz. pkg. frozen petite peas, or 1 can small green peas, drained
1 rib celery, chopped
1 can large black olives, drained and cut in half
2 C cubed cheese, American or cheddar

Dressing

1 C mayo
1 (5 oz.) can evaporated milk
2 tsp. prepared mustard
2 T white vinegar
1-1/2 tsp. celery salt
1/2 tsp. celery seed
salt and pepper to taste

Mix together first 8 salad ingredients. Mix dressing ingredients well and pour over salad. Mix well again. Place in serving bowl. Sprinkle paprika over top and cover. Refrigerate. Best if made the day before.

Alpha Martin • Glasgow

Layered Pasta Cobb Salad

5 cups washed, torn romaine lettuce or salad greens of choice
1/2 lb. grape tomatoes, whole or halved
1 C diced celery
3 C cooked chicken, diced
2 C bow-tie pasta, cooked and cooled
2 ripe avocados, peeled and diced
1/2 to 1 C diced green or red onions
Blue cheese or Ranch dressing
1/2 lb. cooked, crumbled bacon

Place lettuce in the bottom of a 14-cup glass salad bowl. On top of lettuce layer place next 6 ingredients in order. Spread blue cheese or ranch dressing over the top. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Before serving, sprinkle bacon on top.

Lana Toren • Columbia Falls

Sweet and Sour Pasta Salad

1 (16 oz.) pkg. Rotini (spiral shaped pasta)
6 C assorted fresh vegetables such as broccoli florets, small cauliflower florets, seeded and diced cucumber, thinly sliced carrots, chopped onion, and chopped black olives
1 (10 3/4 oz.) can tomato soup
2/3 C vinegar
1/2 C salad oil
1/4 C sugar
1 tsp. dried oregano, crushed
1/4 tsp. garlic powder

Prepare pasta according to package directions. Drain and rinse with cold water. In a very large bowl toss together the pasta with the vegetables. For the dressing: Stir together the soup, vinegar, oil, sugar, oregano, and garlic powder. Pour over the salad. Toss gently to coat. Cover and chill for 4 to 24 hours. Toss gently just before serving. Makes about 15 servings.

Nancy Van Natta • Kalispell

Any Way U Want It Pasta Salad

2-3 C pasta, cooked according to pkg. directions (elbowroni, shells, rotini, radiatore, mini penne, etc.)
1-2 C veggies, chopped to about the size of pasta or smaller (onion, celery, green pepper, carrot, broccoli, cauliflower, sweet potato, peas, etc.)
Salt and pepper to taste
1-3 T sugar
1 tsp. dry mustard
1 T oil
1 T vinegar
Mayonnaise or Miracle Whip to taste
Tuna, chicken, turkey, ham, pickles, olives or crumbled bacon, optional

Mix together pasta, veggies and optional items. Mix together dressing ingredients in a separate bowl and then add to the pasta mixture. Refrigerate.

Ruth Eyre • Billings

Chicken Pasta Salad

4 chicken breasts, grilled & cut into bite sized pieces*
12 oz. pkg. spiral noodles, cooked and drained
1 bunch green onions, chopped
1 red pepper, sliced
1 yellow pepper, sliced
1 2.25 oz. bag sliced almonds, sugared
1 bag baby spinach leaves

Dressing:

1/4 C sesame seeds, toasted
1/3 C red wine vinegar
1/2 C vegetable oil
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1/3 C soy sauce
3 T sugar
1/4 C fresh parsley, chopped

Combine dressing ingredients and shake well. Combine salad ingredients except spinach. Pour dressing on the salad, reserving a little to put on just before serving. Refrigerate a few hours or overnight. Add spinach and remaining dressing just before serving.

* I purchase a bag of frozen grilled chicken strips and thaw, break into pieces and add to salad - very easy.

** To sugar almonds, heat 2 T sugar in small non-stick fry pan until almost melted, add almonds and stir quickly until coated with melted sugar. Be sure to keep from burning. Turn onto waxed paper quickly and let cool. Break into pieces and add to salad.

Kathleen Graler • Corvallis

Mexican Pasta Salad

1 (16 oz.) pkg. colored spiral pasta
1 lb. lean ground beef
¾ C water
1 pkg. Taco seasoning
2 C shredded cheddar cheese
1 large green pepper, diced
1 tomato, chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
1 C sliced black olives
1 (16 oz.) bottle Catalina Salad Dressing

Cook pasta, rinse with cold water, drain and set aside. Cook beef and drain. Add water and taco seasoning. Simmer 15 minutes. Mix all ingredients in large bowl, reserving ½ cup dressing. Cover and chill at least an hour. Add reserved dressing just before serving. Serves 10-15.

Norma Wood • Galata

Creamy Pasta Salad

1-1/2 C twist macaroni, cooked and drained
1/2 pkg. Schwan's frozen mini bowtie pasta and veggie blend
1/4 C favorite Italian dressing
1/2 C chopped red pepper
1/2 C chopped green pepper
1/2 C sliced ripe olives
chopped green onions and celery, optional
1 cup chopped cooked chicken or imitation crab, shrimp, etc.
Parmesan cheese, grated for garnishing

Creamy Dressing

1 C mayonnaise
1 clove minced garlic
1 T red wine vinegar
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. dried basil
1/4 tsp. pepper

After boiling and draining both pastas according to package directions, moisten (while still warm) with your favorite Italian dressing. Cool. Add remaining salad ingredients. Mix creamy dressing and stir into salad. Better if made a few hours in advance. Keeps for several days. (Longer if onions are omitted.) A favorite at branding meals.

Judy Cole • Hysham

Aunt Barbara's Magnificent Macaroni Salad

(with amendments)

1 (1 lb.) pkg. salad macaroni, short cut
1 small yellow onion, grated (see instructions)
1 green bell pepper
1 red bell pepper or 1 jar chopped pimento
2 small cans sliced black olives
½ stick margarine or butter
3 ribs celery, trimmed and diced
½ C or more quality mayonnaise
Salt and pepper to taste

In a large pot, boil macaroni until just soft. While macaroni in cooling, grate into a large mixing bowl one small onion. When macaroni is done, drain and add grated onion. Stir in margarine or butter and stir until melted. Set aside to cool. While cooling, trim bell peppers. Make one nice ring from each pepper, chop/dice the rest. Reserve pepper rings and ½ can of sliced olives. Mix rest of ingredients. The mayonnaise shouldn't "cream" the salad; use just enough to coat each morsel. This is a somewhat dry salad. Combine macaroni with mixed ingredients, decorate with pepper rings and reserved chopped olives on top. Cool or chill thoroughly. Makes enough for a picnic. Amendments: small bay shrimp and sliced water chestnuts may be added as well as finely chopped cilantro. You don't need to salt this salad. The olives contribute enough salty taste.

J. Johnson • Whitefish

Chinese Pasta Salad

1 pkg. Chinese noodles or long spaghetti
1 can or 1 cup salad shrimp
1 can sliced water chestnuts, drained
½ pkg. Uncle Dan's or Hidden Valley Ranch dressing mix
mayonnaise
2 stalks celery, finely diced
onion to taste, finely chopped
1 grated carrot
1 C sliced black olives, if desired

Cook noodles until tender. Drain and cool in a large bowl. Add shrimp, water chestnuts, celery, onion and carrots. Sprinkle with dressing mix and toss lightly. Add enough mayonnaise to moisten. Chill several hours in a covered bowl.

Nancy Light • Cut Bank

Fruit Pasta Salad

1 can fruit cocktail, drained
1 can mandarin oranges, drained
1 ctr. Cool Whip topping
1 C pastel mini marshmallows
1-1/2 C small salad pasta
¼ C coconut, optional

Cook and drain pasta, according to package directions and until tender. Drain and let cool. Mix all ingredients together and serve.

Erin Lyn M. Ramberg • Chinook

Sour Cream Macaroni Salad

1 (8 oz.) pkg. elbow or shell macaroni
¾ C diced green pepper
1/3 C sweet pickle relish
1 (2 oz.) jar diced pimentos, drained
1 T grated onion
½ C mayonnaise
½ C sour cream
¼ C milk
1 ½ tsp. salt
pepper to taste

Cook macaroni according to package directions, rinse in cold water and drain. Place in a large bowl, add green pepper, relish, pimentos, and onions. In a small bowl, combine the remaining ingredients. Mix well. Pour over macaroni mixture and toss to coat. Yield: 6 servings.

Marlene Gerer • Denton

Macaroni-Pepperoni Salad

1 C elbow macaroni, cooked and drained
1 C sliced celery
1/4 C diced red onion
2-3 oz. thinly sliced pepperoni cut into halves or smaller
1-2 T pickle relish
1 tomato, diced
salt and pepper to taste
1 C shredded cheddar cheese for garnish

Mix all ingredients in a bowl except the cheese. Chill at least 1 hour, uncovered. Sprinkle with cheddar cheese just before serving. This salad will serve 4.

Anita Bauer • Poplar

Traveling Light Pasta Salad

10 oz. Angel Hair Pasta
3 cups of a combination of fresh vegetables: julienned peppers (green, red, and/or yellow), sliced or diced cucumbers, sliced green onions, sliced radishes, chopped celery, cherry or pear tomatoes, chopped parsley or cilantro
3 T toasted pine nuts or sliced and toasted almonds
2 T capers, optional
2 - 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
Shredded cheese, asiago and Parmesan are great

Cook pasta according to package directions and drain well. Toss lightly with sunflower oil. Toss pasta with vegetables and pine nuts and capers. Toss all with vinegar. Top with shredded cheese. This version is a side dish, but if you want the “full meal feel” reduce the vegetables by ½ and add seafood, chicken, or tofu. Guests can salt & pepper to taste.

Catherine Hogan • Eureka