

Chickpea Salad

Revithia Saláta

One of the hardest legumes to cook to an edible tenderness is the chickpea; it takes hours of boiling. But take heart: there are excellent canned chickpeas, known also as garbanzo beans. This is one of the few exceptions to my efforts never to use canned vegetables—the others being artichoke hearts and tomato products. But I make sure to rinse the chickpeas thoroughly under cold running water so that the salt in the can disappears.

This salad may serve as a starter or as a main dish for a light lunch.

Serves 8

1. Place the chickpeas in a bowl and mix in the scallions, salt and pepper, celery, and parsley leaves. On the top arrange the feta, cucumber, grapes, and pitted olives.
2. Whip together the olive oil and lemon juice with a bit of mint or basil (you may substitute vinegar for the lemon if you like; you may also use mayonnaise in your dressing). Pour gently so that the dressing coats everything.
3. Cover the salad and let it absorb the flavors. Wash and dry the leaves of romaine lettuce and use each as a little serving "boat" in which you place a scoop of the chickpea salad.

2 cans chickpeas, well rinsed
4 scallions, cut in slender rings
Salt and pepper
1 stalk celery, chopped
1/2 cup flat-leaf parsley leaves
1/2 cup crumbled feta
1 cucumber, peeled and cut in cubes
1 cup seedless white grapes
8 pitted Kalamata olives
1/2 cup olive oil
1/4 cup lemon juice
Mint or basil leaves
Romaine lettuce leaves

