



Mint tabbouleh: Carried beyond the Mediterranean region as conquerors advanced and peasants emigrated, mint is now used in kitchens around the world, including tabbouleh.

## Mint adds to tabbouleh's freshness

BY DANA JACOBI  
SPECIAL WATER

Mint is related to basil, thyme, oregano, rosemary and sage. It shows up in dishes all over the Mediterranean, where it originated.

Carried beyond the Mediterranean region as conquerors advanced and peasants emigrated, mint is now used in kitchens around the world.

Because it's such a popular herb in cooking and in making a soothing, refreshing tea, many cooks grow their own. Growing a patch is easy, although once established, it has a tendency to take over the garden.

In England, mint is used for making a sharp sauce and a sweet jelly. Both compliment the flavor of lamb and soothe digestion after eating a rich lamb roast or grilled chops. The French use mint mainly with green peas, and Italian cooks add it to their breadcrumb stuffing for artichokes, zucchini and other vegetables.

Mint is also popular in Greek and Turkish dishes and adds a bright, unexpected note to tabbouleh. Middle Eastern recipes call for it, both fresh and dried. In Morocco, mint tea, a sugary

blend of the fresh herb and green tea, is ubiquitous.

Asian countries make other uses of this herb. Incendiary mint chutney and cooling raita, the combination of yogurt and cucumber with garlic and mint, are served with curries. In Vietnam, mint is part of the table salad at every day's lunch and dinner. Mint leaves, along with aromatic, Asian varieties of basil, are a customary addition to pho, the rich beef broth with rice noodles that is Vietnam's national dish. In Thailand, mint is used in some curries.

In the New World, Americans think of it mostly for flavoring mint juleps and garnishing berries and desserts. In Mexico, yerba buena, a wild spearmint with a taste reminiscent of oregano, is commonly added when cooking beans and other dishes.

Spearmint, one of the more than 25 varieties of mint, has broad, pointy, bright green leaves. Its mild taste is almost sweet. Darker, bitter and pungent peppermint is more suited to making tea. When buying mint, fresh or dried, taste it to make sure you are getting a full-flavored product.

### MINT TABBOULEH

- 1/2 cup bulghur, cooked according to package directions
- 2/3 cup chopped mint, lightly packed
- 12 small cherry tomatoes, halved, or 6 large, quartered
- 1 small zucchini, finely diced
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 2 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Drain cooked bulghur well and place in medium bowl. Add mint, tomatoes and zucchini. Toss with fork to combine. Add lemon juice and oil while tossing with fork. Season to taste with salt and pepper. This salad keeps in refrigerator, tightly covered, 1 day. Makes 4 servings.

**Nutritional information per serving:** 98 calories, 3 g. fat (less than 1 g. saturated fat), 17 g. carbohydrate, 3 g. protein, 4 g. dietary fiber, 9 mg. sodium.

Dana Jacobi writes for the American Institute for Cancer Research and is the author of *The Joy of Soy*.

## Pasta, peanut butter make a child's lunch

The kids are back to school.

Once again, you are back in the kitchen packing lunches, racking your brain for something different that they will eat. Sound familiar? Experts say that children as well as adults need a wide variety of foods to achieve balanced nutrition and maximum health protection. But getting children to eat varied foods is easier said than done.

With a little creativity, persistence and nutritional savvy, however, you can entice your child into trying new foods. How you do that depends on the child. If your child clings to his PB&J when offered something different, don't try to deprive him of it. See if he'll try peanut butter and jelly on whole wheat bread, or in a whole-grain wrap instead of the less-nutritious, refined white bread. If he accepts that, push the envelope a little more. Suggest he jazz up his sandwich with sliced bananas, or add a little crunch with slivers of cucumber or celery.

If your child agrees to try something other than her daily favorite, offer her a whole-wheat pita pocket lined with lettuce leaves and filled with chicken or tuna salad made with low-fat dressing. If your child likes ethnic foods, suggest a pita filled with hummus and shredded vegetables like broccoli, zucchini, or sprouts.

Some kids will try different foods if they are presented in an appealing way. Cut up a sandwich into triangles and trim off the crust. Or cut sandwiches into fun shapes with cutters used for making cookies and canapés.

Desserts should also be varied. Many children will eat fruit if they can dip it in yogurt, or add a small container of low-fat, flavored yogurt to the lunchbox. Kids also enjoy whole-wheat or carrot muffins, banana bread, or granola bars.

Make sure snacks are healthful, too. Make a trail mix with raisins or other dried fruit combined with a whole-grain cereal



Peanut-ty pasta: Youngsters will often try a new dish if they like the main ingredients. This dish combines pasta with peanut butter (two favorites) and vegetables.

or air-popped popcorn.

Kids will often try a new dish if they like the main ingredients. The following, for instance, combines pasta with peanut butter (two favorites) and vegetables. Kids have so much fun enjoying the pasta twirls coated with creamy peanut butter they don't mind the vegetables.

### PASTA À LA PEANUT BUTTER

- 8 ounce package rotelle or other spiral pasta
- 1 package (8 ounces) frozen snap peas
- 1 medium red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1/3 cup light soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons peanut or light sesame seed oil
- 3 tablespoons chunky peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger
- Salt and freshly ground black

pepper, as desired

Cook pasta as directed on package.

Meanwhile, place snap peas in strainer, rinse with hot water and allow to thaw completely. Drain well. Drain cooked pasta and transfer to bowl. Mix in peas and bell pepper.

In separate bowl or blender, combine soy sauce, oil, peanut butter and ginger. Mix until well blended. Pour over pasta mixture and toss to coat. Cover and chill. Add salt and pepper to taste and serve. Makes 6-1 cup servings.

**Nutritional information per serving:** 262 calories, 9 g. fat (12 g. saturated fat), 36 g. carbohydrate, 9 g. protein, 3 g. dietary fiber, 487 mg. sodium.

Recipe courtesy of The American Institute for Cancer Research.

## Beautiful Hair with Easy Care



European stylist, Joncé, now based in Birmingham, at Farrell Reis Salon, shares how to achieve a great look without spending a lot of time. "Before I can create anything beautiful with my **"structured tm"** cut, I must have or create a foundation from which I can work. As with any sturdy building there must be a foundation to maintain and support it. What so many people do not realize about creating a look, is that it is more than just a beautiful style. The client must be able to go home and achieve the look that the stylist created, on their own.

To begin with, a stylist should spend an ample amount of time consulting with his/her client to see the quality of hair, face structure, client's wants and lifestyle that they will be working with. I can not even begin to promise a new client I can achieve their goal in one visit, unless all the conditions are perfect, which is very seldom.

First, I look at the quality of the hair, texture, condition, density etc. No one can feel beautiful or look beautiful if their hair is not in a healthy state. This is always my main objective, to achieve healthy, shiny, non frizzed hair. It simply goes back to the basics. Your hair did not become that way over night, so it may take a few months to achieve our end goal. I focus heavily on returning the hair to it's most natural state. Many clients I see come to me with over processed hair from too many improper chemical treatments. I do many color services on clients, but as I state, it is how you go about achieving things to get the best results, and for me that is to work with the best products (I use Wella) and all my knowledge of hair care to not damage the hair.

Second, after consultation and analyzing the clients hair, I do a structured cut. Many of my clients are surprised by the amount of time my cuts take, generally 1 hour to 1 hour and

15 minutes, but it is at this point and every cut after (second cut generally takes 50 minutes) that I create the foundation from which I and my clients will always be able to work from. If you take the time to think about how long your hair cut generally takes, and the time you spend afterwards having to "work" with your hair and make it do what you want, wouldn't the investment in time for a quality hair cut make up for the daily effort you put into it? I base my cuts on many things, but my end goal is to have the hair fall where it is designed to. My clients are able to style their hair with very little, if any, use of products, brushes, dryers or irons, and be done in minutes. Why? With precision cutting you can guarantee the look, that is why it is so important to make sure your stylist is giving you a cut you are not having to work against or trim off some pieces at home. This should never happen!

Last, but not least, if I do a chemical process on a client, (color, highlights, marbleizing etc.) it will always be based first on the condition of the hair. If I do not feel the hair can take a certain treatment I will tell the client this and suggest another alternative. It would be very easy for me to sell many additional services to my clients, but I won't. Based on the value I have for my clients and the end result I am after, I would much rather see all my clients walking around with beautiful, healthy hair they are able to work with and love.

In closing, I do not have a problem with "styling products", they are fine, but the product is not there to create the style or make it stay where it is supposed to, products should be used simply to enhance what is already there!

## Take care of yourself and your hair.

Joncé

Joncé is an independent stylist based out of Birmingham, at Farrell Reis Salon. He is a graduate of Vidal Sassoon, Toni and Guy and Wella International academies. As a featured stylist and make over artist, Joncé's work has been seen in many publications and television. He is also a guest presenter and featured stylist for international events along with being a seminar speaker and columnist.

To schedule an appointment or consult with Joncé please call

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