

Greek Wild Rice Salad

Ingredients:

For the Rice-

- 1 cup Wild Rice Blend
- ¼ cup Israeli Couscous
- Chicken stock
- 2 cloves garlic

For the Dressing –

- 3 tablespoons Apple Cider Vinegar
- 3 tablespoons Olive Oil
- 1 tablespoon dry white wine or white cooking wine
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 3-4 cloves garlic, pressed -or- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic
- 1 teaspoon parsley
- 1 teaspoon crushed red paper (or to taste based on your heat preference)
- Salt and Pepper to taste

The Salad Part:

- ½ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 small cucumber, diced
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, diced
- ¼ cup diced green onions (two should be fine)
- 1 small jar marinated artichoke hearts (NOTE: I used the marinade from the jar and added it to the dressing!)
- ¼ cup mixed olives, sliced or coarsely chopped.*
- ¼ cup sliced almonds (I bought the salad toppers and they were cracked black pepper flavor)
- ¼ cup “drunken” mushrooms (mushrooms cooked in white wine and garlic)
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper

*Using just black olives is fine, but I love olives, so I always have a bunch of varieties. In this salad I used black olives, kalamata olives, and green olives (no pimentos were involved)

How to Do It:

For the Rice:

1. Prepare the rice and couscous based on the package directions.* The only changes are to use the chicken stock instead of water and add the cloves of garlic, whole, while cooking.
2. Once the rice is fully cooked, or even just slightly al dente, drain any remaining liquid, remove the cloves of garlic, and set aside to cool. If you are looking to speed up the cooling process, put it in the refrigerator or freezer.

*Be careful not to add butter or oil, even if the directions call for it, this will prevent the rice from absorbing the dressing!

For the Dressing:

1. Combine all of the ingredients in a container with a tight fitting lid.
2. Cover it with the lid and make sure it's snug then shake everything until combined.
3. Place in refrigerator until you are ready to use it. If you can make it a day in advance, do so. This will let the flavors meld.

For the Salad Part:

1. Chop everything into bite size pieces and set aside.
2. A quick explanation of the "Lazy Drunken Mushrooms" recipe is to sauté the ¼ cup chopped white mushrooms with 1-2 cloves of garlic (pressed). Then add ½ cup dry white cooking wine and simmer on medium/medium-low heat until the mushrooms have absorbed all the wine.
3. Add the diced red pepper to the mushrooms just before the last of the wine is absorbed.

Big Finish!:

1. Combine all ingredients (except dressing) in a big bowl until well mixed.
2. Give the dressing a good shake and then pour over salad, tossing to coat.*
3. Cover and let chill for at least 2 hours or up to 24 before serving. Garnish with spinach, cherry tomatoes, and feta to make it pretty.

*You may not need to use all of the dressing. That is ok, I didn't. It is better to just coat the mixture and bring the extra along if it seems dry before serving. If you add too much immediately, the rice could become gummy or mushy (ew.)