

Plant-Based Twists to Classic Summer Dishes

NewsUSA

(NU) - With people more focused on wellness and nutrition these days, interest in a plant-based diet is hotter than ever. One easy way to get in on the trend: Pair summer produce with simple ingredients like pecans for a dish the whole family will enjoy.

Pecans are a versatile ingredient and are naturally sweet with a rich and crunchy texture. As each one-ounce serving of the nuts offers three grams of fiber and protein, essential vitamins, minerals and heart-healthy benefits, pecans also happen to be one of the tastiest ways to elevate the nutrition of any recipe.

In fact, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, scientific evidence suggests, but does not prove, that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts - including pecans - as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. A one-ounce serving of pecans has 18g unsaturated fat and only 2g saturated fat.

Add a sweet and nutritious crunch to this Mediterranean Pecan Pasta Salad, or swap meat for Grilled Cauliflower Steaks with a nutty and nutritious pecan pesto. Discover more delicious recipes at AmericanPecan.com.

Mediterranean Pecan Pasta Salad

Serves 10

Prep time: 15 mins

Cook Time: 12 mins

1/4 cup salt

12 ounces pasta

4 cups radicchio, sliced

1 cup halved marinated olives

1/2 cup marinated artichoke, bite-size pieces

1/3 cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes

1 cup pecan pieces

3/4 cup chopped parsley or mint

6 ounces feta cheese

1 orange, sliced

2 cups chopped spinach

Lemon vinaigrette and fresh cracked pepper (optional)

1. Bring a pot of water to a boil with 1/4 cup of salt. When water is boiling, add in pasta, and cook about 10 minutes. When pasta is cooked, set aside.

2. In a large, clear bowl, layer half the radicchio, and half of the olives, artichoke, and tomato on top. Next, add half the pasta, 1/2 cup of pecans, half of the parsley,



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3 ounces of feta, and the orange slices.

3. Add the spinach, then repeat layering with the radicchio, olives, artichoke, tomato, pasta, pecans, parsley, feta, and orange.

4. If using dressing, add after layering is complete.

5. Add fresh pepper and refrigerate before serving.

Grilled Cauliflower Steaks with Pecan Basil Pesto

Serves 8

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

2 heads of cauliflower, cut into 8 1-inch cauliflower steaks

1 tablespoon pecan, avocado or olive oil

Salt and pepper, to taste

For the pesto:

2 cups fresh basil

1/4 cup raw pecan halves

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1 garlic clove

1 teaspoon lemon zest

1/2 cup pecan or olive oil

1/3 cup shredded parmesan cheese

1. Preheat grill to medium high heat, about 375 to 400 degrees F.

2. Brush sides of cauliflower steaks with oil and add salt and pepper.

3. Grill each side of steak for 4 minutes.

4. Remove from grill and let rest.

5. Make the pesto: in a food processor, pulse the basil, raw pecans, garlic, salt, pepper and lemon zest until finely chopped. Add olive oil and blend.

6. Transfer pesto to a bowl and add parmesan cheese.

7. To serve, top cauliflower steaks with pesto.