

## ITALIAN CHICKEN SALAD

SERVES 4 (MAIN COURSE)

ACTIVE TIME: 35 MIN START TO FINISH: 35 MIN

High-quality ingredients transform this salad into an extremely satisfying weeknight dinner.

### FOR CROUTONS

- 4 cups (1/2-inch) cubes Italian bread (from a 1/2-lb crusty round loaf)
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

### FOR VINAIGRETTE

- 1/4 cup red-wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped shallot
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

### FOR SALAD

- 2 cups coarsely shredded cooked chicken (1/2 lb; from a rotisserie chicken)
- 1 cup *bocconcini* (small fresh mozzarella balls; 6 oz)
- 2 hearts of romaine (3/4 lb total), torn into bite-size pieces
- 1 (8-oz) jar roasted red peppers, rinsed, drained, and cut lengthwise into 1/4-inch-wide strips
- 1 cup assorted marinated brine-cured olives (5 oz)

**MAKE CROUTONS:** Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 400°F.

▪ Toss bread cubes with oil and salt in a large shallow baking pan and spread in 1 layer. Bake, turning over once, until golden and crisp, about 8 minutes. Cool in pan on a rack.

### MAKE VINAIGRETTE AND BEGIN PREPARING SALAD WHILE CROUTONS

**BAKE:** Whisk together all vinaigrette ingredients except oil in a small bowl until combined. Add oil in a slow stream, whisking until emulsified.

▪ Toss chicken and *bocconcini* together with 1/4 cup vinaigrette in a bowl and let stand 10 minutes to allow flavors to develop.

**MAKE SALAD:** Toss together romaine, red peppers, olives, chicken and *bocconcini* mixture, croutons, and remaining vinaigrette in a large bowl until combined.

## LINGUINE WITH ZUCCHINI AND MINT

SERVES 4 (MAIN COURSE)

ACTIVE TIME: 40 MIN START TO FINISH: 40 MIN

Lightly frying the zucchini for this dish is the only step that takes a bit of time. And the result is wonderful; the thin slices, accented with garlic, mint, and lemon, meld perfectly with the pasta.

- 2 lb zucchini (3 large)
- 1 cup olive oil

4 garlic cloves, finely chopped

1 lb dried linguine

3/4 cup chopped fresh mint

1 tablespoon finely grated fresh lemon zest (see Tips, page 184)

1 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

**SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:** an adjustable-blade slicer

▪ Slice zucchini very thinly with slicer.

▪ Heat oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking, then fry zucchini in 3 batches, stirring occasionally, until softened and very pale golden, 3 to 4 minutes per batch. Transfer as fried with a slotted spoon to a baking pan lined with paper towels to drain. Keep zucchini warm, covered with foil.

▪ Add garlic to oil in skillet and cook over moderately high heat, stirring, until very pale golden, about 30 seconds. Remove skillet from heat.

▪ Cook pasta in a 6- to 8-quart pot of boiling salted water (see Tips, page 184), uncovered, until al dente. Reserve 1 cup pasta-cooking water. Drain pasta in a colander and transfer to a large shallow bowl.

▪ Toss pasta with garlic oil, zucchini, mint, zest, salt, and pepper. Add some of reserved cooking water to moisten if necessary.

For more **EVERY DAY** recipes, see page 102.

Packed with vegetables, fresh mozzarella, crisp croutons, and time-saving rotisserie chicken, this hearty main-course salad covers all the bases.

