

## 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 (½-inch) cubes Italian bread (from a ½-lb crusty round loaf)
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt

### FOR VINAIGRETTE

- ¼ cup red-wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped shallot
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

### FOR SALAD

- 2 cups coarsely shredded cooked chicken (½ lb; from a rotisserie chicken)
- 1 cup *bocconcini* (small fresh mozzarella balls; 6 oz)
- 2 hearts of romaine (¾ lb total), torn into bite-size pieces
- 1 (8-oz) jar roasted red peppers, rinsed, drained, and cut lengthwise into ¼-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 ¼ 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
- ¾ cup chopped fresh mint
- 1 tablespoon finely grated fresh lemon zest (see Tips, page 184)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ 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.

