

Italian vegetable salad



60-Minute Gourmet

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1-2 large, ripe tomatoes	2 tbsp tarragon wine vinegar
1 large green pepper	1 tsp capers
2 hard-cooked eggs	1 tsp chopped fresh dill
6 canned artichoke hearts	Salt and pepper
1/4 cup olive oil	

1. Remove the core from the tomatoes. Slice the tomatoes thinly, cutting 8 center slices altogether. (Use the ends for another dish.)
2. Slice the green pepper crosswise into $\frac{1}{8}$ -in. wide rings. Remove the seeds and core. There should be 8 green pepper rings. (Use the ends for another dish.)
3. Shell and thinly slice the eggs. There should be 16 center slices (with both yolk and white). (Use the slices of white only from each end for another dish.)
4. Drain the artichoke hearts, reserving 2 tbsp liquid from the can. Slice each heart crosswise into 4 equal rings, making 24 in all.
5. Arrange the tomato slices in one layer on a large serving platter, or on 4 individual plates. Place 3 slices of artichoke heart on each tomato. Lay a green pepper ring on the artichokes, and top with 2 egg slices, overlapping them slightly in the center. The effect will be a tiered arrangement of different colors.
6. To make the dressing, combine the olive oil and vinegar in a screw-topped jar. Add the capers and reserved artichoke can liquid. Add the dill, and salt and pepper to taste. Cover the jar and shake vigorously to blend.
7. Pour the dressing over the salad, or serve it separately. **4 servings.**

VARIATION:

Zucchini, cherry tomato and provolone salad:

Rinse 4 small tender zucchini, each about 1-in. in diameter, and pat dry. Trim the ends from the zucchini, then cut them into strips lengthwise, to make about 24 strips. Cut 12 cherry tomatoes in half. Cut $\frac{1}{2}$ lb provolone cheese in thin strips, to make about 24 strips. Make a pinwheel pattern on a large round platter, alternating the zucchini strips with the cheese strips. Place a tomato half at the end of each zucchini strip, along the outer edge of the platter. Pile 6 whole cherry tomatoes in the center, and garnish with watercress sprigs. Serve with the dressing above (made without the artichoke can liquid).

Platter from D. H. Evans, London