

Italian Chickpea Cucumber Tomato Salad

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This refreshing **Italian Chickpea Salad** is a celebration of simple, wholesome ingredients that come together in the most delicious way. Made with home-cooked chickpeas, juicy fresh tomatoes, crisp cucumbers, sweet bell peppers, and fragrant herbs, it's tossed in a classic Italian vinaigrette for a light and flavorful dish. It's perfect as a make-ahead lunch, a picnic salad, or a vibrant side for grilled meats or seafood. Naturally gluten-free and full of plant-based protein, this salad is both nourishing and satisfying.

Cooking your own chickpeas from scratch makes a noticeable difference in taste and texture. Simmered gently with garlic and bay leaf, the chickpeas soak up a subtle savory aroma that enhances the freshness of the vegetables. With bright parsley, a splash of red wine vinegar, and a drizzle of good olive oil, this salad is the kind of rustic Italian cooking that shines through its simplicity.

Things to know about this Italian chickpea cucumber tomato salad

- **Canned Chickpeas Work Too:** While cooking chickpeas from scratch adds depth and texture, canned chickpeas are a great time-saver and work perfectly in this recipe. Just be sure to rinse and drain them well before using.
- **Best Served Fresh or Chilled:** This salad can be served right after assembling, but letting it sit for 20–30 minutes allows the flavors to meld. It also holds up beautifully in the fridge for up to 3 days, making it

ideal for meal prep.

- **Easy to Customize:** Add crumbled feta, shaved Parmigiano-Reggiano, or fresh mozzarella for a cheesy twist. For more protein, toss in some canned tuna, grilled chicken, or hard-boiled eggs. Chopped artichoke hearts, capers, or even avocado also make great additions.
- **Perfect for Summer Gatherings:** Light, bright, and easy to make ahead—this salad is perfect for potlucks, picnics, or any warm-weather meal.
- **Love Salads?** Don't miss my other fresh and flavorful salad recipes—perfect for any season or occasion. Watermelon cucumber feta salad or my cucumber tomato avocado salad, you're going to love them. Please leave me a comment on your experience with this recipe. I love hearing from you it's my favorite part, ENJOY!!!!

Ingredients

For the Chickpeas:

- 1 cup dried chickpeas
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 garlic clove, smashed
- A few sprigs of fresh rosemary or thyme (optional)
- Salt (added after cooking)

For the Salad:

- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 cups cooked chickpeas (from above)

- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup sliced English cucumber
- ½ cup red peppers, chopped
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced red onion
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 tablespoons fresh basil, torn

Optional: Top with crumbled feta or shaved parmesan

For the Dressing:

- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil (use a good Italian one)
 - 1/4 cup tablespoons red wine vinegar OR fresh lemon juice
 - 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 - salt and Freshly cracked black pepper to taste
 - 1 garlic clove, finely grated or mashed into a paste
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Instructions

1. Cook the Chickpeas

Soak 1 cup of dried chickpeas in water overnight (8–12 hours). Drain and rinse.

Place them in a pot and cover with water by at least 2 inches. Add:

- 1 bay leaf
- 1 garlic clove (smashed)
- Optional: a small sprig of rosemary or thyme

Bring to a boil, then reduce to a gentle simmer. Cook uncovered for **45–60 minutes**, or until tender but not mushy. **Salt the water** during the last 10 minutes of cooking. Drain and let cool slightly.

Time-saver tip: Cook extra chickpeas and freeze them for future use.

2. Assemble the Salad

In a large bowl, combine:

- Cooked and cooled chickpeas
- Cherry tomatoes, red peppers, red onion and sliced cucumbers

Gently mix in chopped parsley and basil.

3. Make the Dressing

In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, vinegar (or lemon juice), oregano, garlic, salt, and pepper.

4. Toss and Serve

Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to combine. Let sit at room temperature for **20–30 minutes** to develop flavor.

Top with shaved Parmigiano or feta