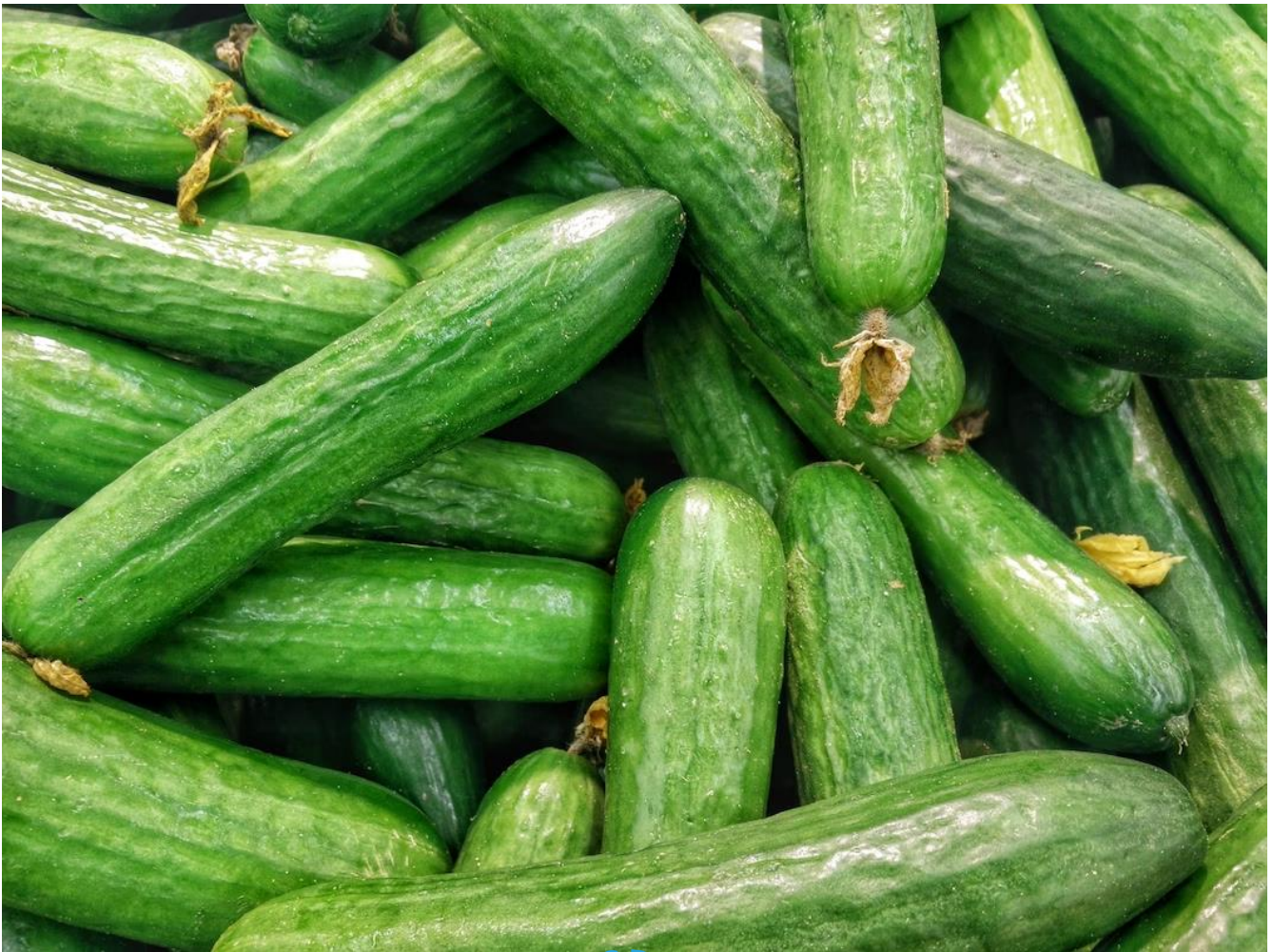

Cucumbers 101

More than a salad accessory.



3 KINDS OF CUCUMBERS



Basic Slicer

Green skin, bigger seeds.
Use for slicing and salads.



Salt and Pepper

Pale yellowish/white skin and interior
flesh. Smaller size. Use for snacking
or pickling.



Armenian

Long serpentine shapes.
Best for slicing.

Cucumbers are in a family known as cucurbits that includes melons, squash, pumpkins and gourds. They are classified as either slicers or picklers. Pickling cucumbers have thin, lighter skin than slicers. Slicing cucumbers are larger with dark green skin, and because they are thicker, they are not usually suitable for pickling.

Selecting Your Cucumber:

Some freshly picked cucumbers will have a fuzzy or prickly coating. You may need to wear gloves when harvesting. Choose your cucumber based on how you plan to use it. Small cucumbers should be used for snacking or pickling. Longer cucumbers should be used for slicing.



How to store:

Put cucumbers in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator for up to a week.

CUCUMBER

Cucurbits

Nutritional Snapshot

- Extremely water dense
- High fibre keeps you regular and avoids constipation
- Unpeeled cucumber contains 2 grams of protein and 2 grams of fiber
- Good source of vitamin K, C, magnesium, potassium and manganese
- peel

Medicinal Uses

- Putting them on your skin may help ease sunburn pain, swelling, and damaged skin
- Contain antioxidants, including flavonoids and tannins, which prevent the accumulation of harmful free radicals and may reduce the risk of chronic disease
- May be effective at reducing oxidative stress and preventing diabetes-related complications

Preparing:

If you purchase cucumbers that are waxed, you should peel them. (Our farm does not wax our cucumbers). If the seeds are bulky inside, slice the cucumber lengthwise and scoop them out. Scoring the skin of a cucumber with a fork or zester gives it attractive stripes. Slice, dice or cut into chunks according to recipe.

Substitutes:

Celery, water chestnuts, jicama

Pairs well with:

Dill, tuna, lemon, salmon, egg, mint, basil, avocado, scallions, spinach, lettuce, lime,

radishes, carrots, tomatoes, cabbage.

Best Uses:

Chilled Soup

Raw with dip

Salad

Pickles or Relish

Cucumber water

Canapés

Salad Dressing

Sushi

Sautéed or pan-fried

Cucumber noodles (spiralize)

Juice

Sandwiches or Wraps

Pasta salad

Filled Cucumber

Cups/Boats

Tzatziki (yogurt sauce)

Cucumber Chips

Hummus

Smoothie

How to Freeze Cucumbers:

Cucumbers do not freeze well raw, but if sliced, preserved in vinegar or brine and frozen, they will retain their texture and you can add them to salads year round.

Step 1: Prepare the cucumbers.

Wash and peel. Then slice cucumbers thinly with a food processor or knife.

Step 2: Prepare the Brine.

In a large bowl, mix 2 quarts of cucumbers with chopped onions and 2 tablespoons of salt. Let stand for 2 hours. Rinse well with cold water, drain and return to clean bowl. Add 2/3 cup of oil, 2/3 cup vinegar, 2/3 cup of sugar, and 1 teaspoon of celery seed. Mix well. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Step 3: Freeze.

Pack cucumbers in brine in rigid plastic containers or glass jars, leaving 1 inch of head space. Freeze. Wait at least 1 week before defrosting and eating. Cucumbers preserved in brine will last several months in the freezer.

How to Thaw: Defrost cucumbers in brine in the refrigerator.

Suggested Recipes:

Cucumber Rolls with Avocado Spread

Adapted from www.pureella.com

Ingredients:

- 1 large cucumber (or 2)
- 3 ripe avocados
- 1/4 cup capers
- 1/2 teaspoon pink Himalayan salt or sea salt
- freshly cracked black pepper
- 2 tablespoons of freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped fine + more for plating
- 1/8 cup fresh dill, chopped fine

Directions:

It's a good idea to grab more cucumbers than you need for this recipe as some pieces could break and you only use the middle part not the thin sides that will be cut. You don't want to run out. Wash and dry the cucumbers. Use a mandolin to cut thin slices all the way through. Keep slicing the sides until you reach the full centre. Be careful that they don't break. (the thin pieces could be saved for a salad or eaten up or composted).

In a bowl, mash all the avocado meat and add in all the other ingredients and mix.

Lay out each cucumber slice and layer a coat of the avocado spread all the way across. Start to roll on one side until you reach the end. Be sure to have some avocado spread at the end (without any capers) to act like glue to seal them up at the end.

Creamy Cucumber Salad

from Cook's Country

Allow the cucumbers to sit for the full 20 minutes before folding them into the dressing.

Ingredients:

- 3 cucumbers, peeled, halved lengthwise, seeded and sliced thin

1/2 c. thinly sliced red onion

3 T. cider vinegar

1/2 c. sour cream

1/4 c. minced fresh dill

1/2 t. sugar

salt and pepper

Directions:

Spread cucumber slices in single layer on paper towel-lined baking sheet; refrigerate for 20 minutes. Combine onion and vinegar in bowl and let sit for 20 minutes.

Whisk sour cream, dill, sugar and 1/2 t. salt together in large bowl. Add cucumbers and onion-vinegar mixture, and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Tzatziki Sauce (Yogurt Dipping Sauce)

Put this on pita bread or chicken, or use it as a dip for veggies.

Ingredients:

1½ cups plain yogurt

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 cucumber

1 clove garlic

1 tablespoon dill

1-2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

salt & pepper

Directions:

Peel, seed and shred cucumber.

Juice lemon and set aside.

Combine remaining ingredients in a large bowl. Stir in cucumber.

Allow flavors to blend at least 30 minutes before serving. Serve cold.

Spicy Thai Cucumber Salad

Adapted from www.OneLittleProject.com

Ingredients:

For the Salad:

2 Cucumbers
2 large carrots
3 green onions
1/4 cup peanuts

For the Dressing:

1/3 cup rice vinegar
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1/2 teaspoon Red pepper flakes (1/4 teaspoon if you want it less spicy)
2 Tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt

Directions:

Spiralize the cucumbers. Cut the carrots into thin julienne strips. Thinly slice the green onions. Chop the peanuts.

Mix the dressing ingredients together in a small bowl, and whisk until well combined.

Add the chopped vegetables to a large salad bowl. (Save some green onions and peanuts for garnish.)

Pour the dressing over top and toss to combine.

Garnish with extra chopped peanuts and green onions.

Serve immediately.

Sweet Pickle Relish

Adapted from the "Ball Blue Book of Preserving"

Makes 8 half-pints of relish.

Ingredients:

1 quart chopped cucumbers (I used pickling cukes. If you use garden cukes with big seeds, seed them first. If they're supermarket cukes with thick waxed skins, peel them).

2 cups chopped onion

2 cups chopped bell peppers (the recipe calls for 1 cup each of red and green. I used mostly green)

1/4 cup salt

3 1/2 cups sugar

1 tablespoon celery seed

1 tablespoon mustard seed

2 cups cider vinegar

Directions:

Combine all the chopped veggies in a large bowl, sprinkle with the salt and cover with cold water. Let it stand for two hours, then drain, rinse, and drain well. Taste for salt level. If it's too salty, rinse and drain again.

Combine the rest of the ingredients in a large pot. Bring to a boil, then add the drained veggies. Simmer for ten minutes.

Pack the hot relish into prepared jars, leaving 1/4 inch headspace. Remove air bubbles in relish and adjust headspace if necessary.

Adjust the caps and process for 10 minutes.

Cucumber Lime Agua Fresca

from www.Deliciousobsessions.com

Ingredients:

1 lb. organic cucumbers {about 2 large cucumbers}, ends removed, roughly chopped

3-4 organic limes, juiced

3 tablespoons light-colored raw honey

3 cups cold coconut water or filtered water

Pinch sea salt

Ice

Directions:

Wash and prep cucumber and limes. Remove ends of cucumbers. Optional - peel cucumbers. If the seeds are bothersome to you, by all means, remove the seeds. You can easily do this by cutting the cucumber in half and use a teaspoon to scrape out the seeds.

Roughly chop the cucumbers and add to blender. Cut limes in half and squeeze juice into blender. Add honey, 2 cups coconut water, and optional sea salt to blender. Blend until pureed and no chunks remain.

Place fine mesh strainer over a large pitcher, large bowl or 8-cup glass measuring cup. Pour cucumber lime agua fresca through strainer. Use a spatula or back of a spoon to extract as

much liquid out as possible. Discard solids. Add remaining coconut water, stir to combine. Refrigerate until cold.

Jaime Overmeyer's Angel Hair Pasta Salad with Cucumbers

Okay, so this salad is simply amazing. I stumbled upon it this past year at a potluck event. It was so good, that when the potluck was over, I staked out the table where this dish sat, hoping to find the chef of this fine salad. She never appeared, so I finally gave up. Then as luck would have it, I saw a woman carrying this dish as she left the building, and I chased her down, gave her my email address and begged her to send me this recipe.

Ingredients:

1 lb. angel hair pasta

4 slicing cucumbers

1/2 c. red onion

1–15 oz Marzetti Slaw Sauce (in salad dressing section)

1 cup half and half (You may have to add more)

2 T. dillweed

1 c. sugar

Directions:

Peel and thinly slice cucumbers.

Chop onion finely and mix with cucumbers and salt. Let stand.

Break pasta into quarters and cook according to package directions.

Meanwhile, mix remaining ingredients (Marzetti sauce, half-and-half, dill, sugar).

Drain excess water off cucumber mixture.

Rinse and drain pasta.

Mix everything together.

Best if made a day ahead.