

Easy Seafood Pasta Salad: Perfect for Potlucks & Picnics

cucumber, green onions, and cherry tomatoes



TIME
2-3 min

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INGREDIENTS

3 boxes (12-16 oz each) tri-color rotini, cooked according to package directions
1 1/2 sticks (12 tablespoons) butter
3 small cucumbers, cut into bite-sized pieces (or 1 large cucumber)
2 bags (about 1.5 - 2 lbs total) large raw shrimp, peeled and deveined
3 packs (about 8 oz each) imitation crab meat (flake or lump style), flaked or cut into pieces
1 bunch green onions, thinly sliced
1 pack (about 1 pint) cherry tomatoes, halved
1 bottle (16 oz, approx.) Olive Garden Italian dressing (or your favorite brand)
Salad Supreme seasoning, to taste (or similar all-purpose seasoning blend)
Old Bay seasoning, to taste (for shrimp)
Complete Seasoning (like Lawry's Seasoned Salt or your preferred all-purpose blend), to taste (for shrimp)
Salt and black pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Let's get this delicious : Seafood Pasta Salad assembled!
2. Cook : Pasta: Cook the 3 boxes of tri-color rotini according to package directions until al dente. Drain thoroughly, rinse with cold water to stop the cooking and prevent sticking, and set aside to cool completely.
3. Cook : Seafood: In a large skillet, melt the 1 1/2 sticks of butter over medium heat. Add the 2 bags of large raw shrimp to the skillet. Season the shrimp generously with Old Bay seasoning and Complete Seasoning. Cook the shrimp for 2-3 minutes per side, or until they turn pink and opaque and are fully cooked through. Remove the cooked shrimp from the skillet and set aside to cool. Add the 3 packs of imitation crab meat (if using real crab, no cooking needed) to the same skillet with any remaining butter and gently warm through for 1-2 minutes, then remove and let cool. Once cooled, if shrimp are very large, you can chop them into bite-sized pieces. Flake or cut the imitation crab meat into desired pieces.
4. Prepare : Vegetables: While pasta and seafood cool, prepare your vegetables. Cut the 3 small cucumbers into bite-sized pieces. Thinly slice the 1 bunch of green onions. Halve the 1 pack of cherry tomatoes.
5. Combine : All Ingredients: In a very large mixing bowl, combine the cooled cooked rotini, cooked and cooled shrimp, flaked crab meat, cut cucumbers, sliced green onions, and halved cherry tomatoes.
6. Dress and : Season: Pour the entire bottle of Olive Garden Italian dressing over the mixture. Sprinkle generously with Salad Supreme seasoning. Add salt and

black pepper to taste.

7. **Mix & : Chill:** Gently toss all the ingredients together until everything is well combined and coated with the dressing and seasonings. Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, or preferably longer (even overnight), to allow the flavors to meld and the salad to chill thoroughly.
8. **Serve:** Give the salad another gentle stir before serving. Enjoy cold!

SWAPS & NOTES

Pasta: Tri-color rotini adds visual appeal and holds dressing well, but any short pasta like fusilli, penne, or even elbow macaroni can be used.

Shrimp: Large raw shrimp are best for flavor and texture.

Cooked shrimp can be used for even quicker prep, but raw cooked in butter will offer more flavor.

Crab Meat: Imitation crab meat is convenient and commonly used.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Cool Pasta & Seafood Completely: This is crucial!

Warm ingredients will make the salad soggy and cause the dressing to be absorbed too quickly.

Drain Seafood Well: Especially if using canned crab or cooked shrimp, ensure all excess liquid is drained to prevent a watery salad.

Don't Overcook Shrimp: Shrimp cooks quickly!

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/easy-seafood-pasta-salad-perfect-for-potlucks-picnics/>