

Crunchy Cucumber with Chili and Herbs: A Fresh, Spicy Side Dish You'll Crave

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INGREDIENTS

Fresh cucumbers
Chili, such as red pepper flakes, fresh chili, or chili oil
Fresh herbs, such as cilantro, parsley, dill, or mint
Salt
Black pepper
Olive oil or a light dressing base
Optional lemon or vinegar for brightness

DIRECTIONS

1. **Prep the Cucumbers:** Wash and slice the cucumbers into rounds, spears, or smashed chunks depending on the texture you want. If using larger cucumbers with many seeds, remove some of the seed center first.
2. **Add the Seasoning:** Place the cucumbers in a mixing bowl and season with salt and black pepper. Add your chili ingredient of choice, whether that is red pepper flakes, fresh chopped chili, or a spoonful of chili oil.
3. **Add the Herbs:** Chop the fresh herbs and add them to the bowl. Toss gently so the herbs are evenly distributed without bruising them too much.
4. **Finish with Oil or Acid:** Drizzle with a little olive oil or a light dressing. Add lemon juice or a splash of vinegar if you want extra brightness.
5. **Toss and Serve:** Mix everything together until the cucumbers are evenly coated. Serve right away for the best crunch, or let it sit briefly for a few minutes if you want the flavors to meld a bit more.

SWAPS & NOTES

This kind of cucumber dish works best with crisp cucumbers that have a good snap.

English cucumbers are a great option because they have thinner skin and fewer seeds, but regular cucumbers work just as well if peeled or seeded to your liking.

The chili component can be adjusted based on your heat preference.

Red pepper flakes offer an easy pantry shortcut, while fresh sliced chili gives the dish a more vibrant kick.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

For maximum crunch, keep the cucumbers chilled before making the dish.

Cold cucumbers make the whole recipe feel even more refreshing.

If you want a slightly more seasoned result, sprinkle the cucumbers with salt and let them sit for a few minutes before tossing with the other ingredients.

This helps them absorb flavor while still staying crisp.

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