

Orzo Salad with Asparagus, Feta, Spinach and Lemon

½ lb. orzo, cooked
1 lb. asparagus
1 (6-ounce) bag fresh baby spinach
2 T extra virgin olive oil
½ cup red onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
Zest of 1 small lemon
½ cup toasted nuts – chopped pistachios, pine nuts, slivered almonds or pumpkin seeds
1 cup feta, crumbled
Pinch of nutmeg
Pinch of cinnamon
Salt to taste

Cook the orzo according to the directions on the box, drain and transfer to a large bowl. Prep the asparagus: trim each one by snapping them at the end of their stem, which will separate the tough part from the tender. Bring a pot of water to a boil, drop in the asparagus and cook for 2-3 minutes, until crisp-tender. Drain them under cold running water. Cut them into 1½ inch pieces and set add them to the orzo.

In a large sauté pan, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sauté for 1-2 minutes, just until aromatic. Add the spinach and a pinch of salt and cook until wilted and tender, about 1 minute. Add mixture to the orzo; add the feta, nutmeg, cinnamon, lemon zest, lemon juice and salt to taste.

Heat a small-medium sauté pan over medium heat. Add the nuts and toast until they begin to brown, about 3 minutes. Watch them carefully so they do not burn. Sprinkle on top of the orzo and serve. Serves 5.