

Green papaya salad

Ingredients

serves 6 - 8

Salad

1kg Green Papaya and/ or green mango
2 tablespoons raw sugar (for green papaya only)
4 large spring onions, thinly sliced on diagonal
1 punnet grape tomatoes, sliced lengthways
1 bunch mint, roughly chopped
1 bunch coriander, roughly chopped
150g mung bean vermicelli

optional extras or substitutes

¼ cup Vietnamese mint - very peppery
½ cup Thai basil - aniseed taste
Star fruit, sliced/ Green apple, sliced
Jicama, grated/ Green mango, grated

Dressing (increase if using extras)

3 teaspoons finely chopped garlic
1½ teaspoons finely chopped small red chilli
1½ teaspoons light palm sugar
90ml lime juice
90ml fish sauce

Garnish

Finely sliced chilli to garnish
¼ - ½ cup roasted peanuts, sesame seeds &/ or pepitas

Protein

400 - 600g poached chicken breast fillets
400 - 600g peeled cooked prawns, crab or lobster
400 - 600g marinated firm tofu, cubed

Green papaya is not always easy to find. Often green grocers stock green paw paw instead. Whatever you buy, just make sure it is very firm, with taut smooth skin, not wrinkly. If you can not find firm green mangoes or papaya, you can happily substitute with any combination of wombok cabbage, purple cabbage, coz lettuce, red capsicum and/ or grated carrots instead.

Method

For the salad: Peel the green papaya and cut in half. Scoop out the seeds and discard. Grate the **green papaya** with a box grater, food processor or Asian grating tool into a large bowl. Sprinkle with sugar and toss. Cover and set aside for at least 30 minutes (juices will come out.) Squeeze papaya until very dry (you'll need to put some muscle into this). Loosen and place in a large mixing bowl. If using **green mango**, there is no need to sprinkle with sugar. It simply needs grating. Meanwhile, wash, pluck and roughly chop both mint and coriander and other herbs if using. Set aside.

For the vermicelli: Place the vermicelli into a large heat proof bowl and cover with boiling water. Stir occasionally until soft and then drain well and snip with kitchen scissors into 5cm - 8cm lengths.

Optional: If your nuts or seeds are raw, turn oven to 130°C and place in a shallow baking tray. Roast for 20-30 minutes, shaking the tray 2 - 3 times to ensure even cooking. Chop nuts roughly.

For the Dressing: In a mortar, firstly pound garlic and chilli to a smooth paste. Add the sugar to increase the grinding action. Only when smooth, stir in liquids and adjust to taste. If prepping ahead, leave lime juice until last.

To assemble: Reserve a few tomatoes, herbs, seeds and a little protein to garnish your salad. Gently combine all of the other ingredients in a large bowl with half of the dressing. Stack ingredients in the centre of a serving plate. Top with reserved ingredients, sliced chilli, and roasted nuts or seeds. Serve with extra dressing in a jug.