

# CHILE AND SPRING SALAD

Ah, there's nothing like springtime in the desert when its vast sandy floor becomes a riot of plant life, many of which sprout colorful blossoms as vivid and varied as a kid's box of crayons. Celebrate our floral beauty by rustling up a colossal bowl of multi-colored pasta tossed with chile peppers and a lively dressing that blushes with a hint of chili powder. It's simply enchanting!



By Sunny Conley Photography by Joseph Burgess

## Enchanting Springtime Pasta Toss

Serves 10

- 1 (8 ounce) package dried multi-colored corkscrew pasta
- 3 medium slightly ripe tomatoes, stemmed and chopped
  - 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 (4 ounce) cans diced hot green chile peppers, undrained
  - 2 (2 ¼ ounce) can sliced ripe black olives, drained
  - ¼ cup chopped green bell pepper, stemmed and seeded
  - ¼ cup red bell pepper, stemmed and seeded
  - ¼ cup (or more to taste) extra light olive oil
  - 2-3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
  - 3 tablespoons vinegar
- 2 tablespoons snipped fresh cilantro leaves
- 1 ½ teaspoons chili powder (Texas style)
  - ¾ teaspoon garlic salt
  - ½ teaspoon sugar
  - ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- Fresh cilantro sprigs for garnish

### Pasta Mix:

Cook pasta according to package directions; drain. Rinse with cold water and drain again. Combine the drained pasta, tomatoes, onion, chile pepper, olives, and green and red bell peppers in a large mixing bowl. Toss to mix well.

### Dressing:

Combine oil, lemon juice, vinegar, the 2 tablespoons of cilantro, chili powder, garlic salt, sugar and black pepper in a screw top jar. Secure top on jar and shake well. Add the dressing to the pasta mixture; toss gently to coat. Cover and refrigerate, preferably overnight to meld flavors. Serve on individual salad plates and garnish with a sprig of cilantro.



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