

Healthy Summertime Pasta Salad with Sweet Balsamic Vinaigrette

A vibrant, veggie-packed pasta salad with a lightly sweet vinaigrette perfect for warm weather meals.

By Timothy Witcher, Executive Chef, FoodSmart USA • updated June 23, 2025

From the Clifford Brown Jazz Festival / **MobileMusicLab.com** Healthy Choices Demonstration Kitchen

Prep Time: 25 min

Chill Time: 20 min

Serves: 6–8

Ingredients — For the Pasta Salad:

- 1 lb cooked low-carb pasta (or pasta of choice)
- 2 cups cucumbers, diced
- 2 cups roasted zucchini, diced
- ⅓ cup red onion, small-diced
- ¼ cup garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups fresh baby spinach, chopped
- ½ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 cup fresh basil, thinly sliced
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup grated Parmesan
- Optional:* 1 cup smoked Gouda, medium-diced
- 2 tsp sea salt

Ingredients — For the Sweet Balsamic Vinaigrette:

- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup dark brown sugar
- 2 tbsp brown mustard
- ¾ cup avocado oil

Instructions

Prepare the Vinaigrette:

Whisk together balsamic vinegar, brown sugar, mustard, and avocado oil.

Assemble the Salad:

Combine pasta, vegetables, herbs, cheese, and salt in a large bowl.

Dress the Salad:

Pour vinaigrette over the pasta salad and toss well.

Chill:

Allow salad to sit for at least 20 minutes to meld flavors.

Serve:

Adjust seasoning if needed and enjoy chilled or at room temperature.

