

# BARLEY, CUCUMBER, AVOCADO SALAD

**From the Kitchen of:** Randy Schwartz, President, Culinary Historians of Ann Arbor

**Preparation Time:** 20 minutes | **Cooling Time:** 1 hour | **Cook Time:** 20 minutes | **Yield:** 4 bowls

**Common Allergens:** Gluten, Tree Nuts (Optional)

According to Randy, “The contrast of flavors and textures in this salad is delightful. The toasted barley or bulgur is grainy and nutty; the ripe avocado is soft and rich; and the raw cucumber and onion lend their crunchiness to every forkful. Finally, the dressing is both tangy (from lemon or vinegar) and sweet (from honey or date syrup).”

Randy shares that this dish is “emblematic of Ann Arbor’s cosmopolitan character.” He likes to purchase his pearly-barley kernels from Hamel’s Euro Market (a Russian-American grocery store) or from the Galleria Asian Market. Randy purchases his bulgur wheat and date syrup (called Dibs Al-Tamr in Arabic) from any of the Arabic grocery stores in town. Randy says that “the mixture of diverse cultures in Ann Arbor is as striking as the mixture of tastes in this dish!”

## INSTRUCTIONS:

- In a dry saucepan on medium-high heat, toast the grains, moving them around in the pan periodically, until fragrant and darkened in color.
- In the same saucepan used to toast the grains, add 3 cups of water and simmer the toasted grains for about 20 minutes until softened. When the grains have softened, but are still a bit chewy, remove them from the heat and drain.
- Refrigerate the cooked grains for at least 1 hour.
- While the grains are cooling, assemble the dressing by whisking together the oil, lemon juice, honey or date syrup, salt, and black pepper. Refrigerate to chill.
- Optionally, toast almonds while the grains and dressing are cooling. Heat a dry frying pan over medium-high heat. Once hot, add the slivered almonds and toast them until they are golden brown and crispy. Set aside.
- Once cool, remove the cooked grains and dressing from the refrigerator, and transfer them to a large bowl along with the diced onion and cucumber. Mix well with a large spoon.
- Remove the pit and peel from each avocado. On a plate or cutting board, slice the avocado into a small dice, trying not to mush the pieces. Transfer the diced avocado to the large bowl and gently mix the salad with the large spoon until just combined.
- If using almonds, sprinkle them on top of the salad.
- Serve and enjoy! This salad can be kept refrigerated in an air-tight container for 24 – 48 hours. After that, the avocado gets mushy and discolors.

## INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups pearl barley kernels, or groats (or large-size bulgur wheat)
- 6 Tablespoons olive oil
- 2 Tablespoons lemon juice, fresh-squeezed or store-bought (and/or white vinegar)
- 4 teaspoons honey (or date syrup)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 6 Tablespoons slivered almonds (optional)
- 1/2 medium onion, peeled and diced
- 1 cucumber, approximately 8 inches long, diced into 1/4 inch pieces
- 2 small ripe avocados