



Makes 10 cups
Preparation Time: 45 minutes
Cook Time: 2 hours

INGREDIENTS:

¼ cup lime juice

2 teaspoons Dijon mustard

2 teaspoons pure maple syrup

1 teaspoon low-sodium fajita seasoning, such as Simply Organic brand

1 8.8-oz. package dry red lentil penne pasta

4 ears fresh sweet corn, husks and silks removed

2 orange bell peppers

2 fresh poblano chiles

1 large sweet onion, cut into ½-inch slices

1 15-oz. can no-salt-added pinto beans, rinsed and drained (1½ cups)

1 cup halved grape or cherry tomatoes

½ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1 avocado, halved, seeded, peeled, and sliced

2 tablespoons pepitas

Lime wedges

Fajita Pasta Salad

Red lentil noodles give extra color to this festive pasta salad, which borrows its zesty flavors from fajitas, a Tex-Mex dish of grilled veggies, savory spices, and fresh herbs served on warm tortillas. Sweet corn, **bell peppers**, poblano chiles, and onions are grilled to tender perfection and sliced into fajita-style strips before joining the pasta. A spicy lime vinaigrette is drizzled over the eye-catching jumble to pack each forkful with powerful flavors, while pinto beans and juicy tomatoes are added for extra substance. After divvying up the pasta salad into bowls, top each portion with slices of creamy avocado and crunchy pepitas to get the full Southwestern experience.

For more unique pasta salad recipes, check out these tasty ideas:

- [Cauliflower Pasta Salad Lettuce Wraps](#)
- [Stone Fruit Pasta Salad with Fennel](#)
- [Broccoli Pasta Salad with Red Pepper Pesto](#)
- Or take a look at our full [collection of pasta salad recipes](#)

By Ellen Boeke

- 1 For Lime Vinaigrette, in a small bowl whisk together lime juice, Dijon mustard, maple syrup, fajita seasoning, and 3 tablespoons water. Set aside.
- 2 Cook penne according to package directions; drain. Rinse under cold water; drain well. Transfer to a large bowl.
- 3 Grill the next four ingredients (through onion), covered, over medium 8 to 10 minutes or until corn is tender and browned in places, turning occasionally. Cool vegetables 15 minutes or until cool enough to handle. Cut corn off cobs in planks. Remove stems and seeds from bell peppers and poblano chiles, peeling poblanos if desired. Cut peppers and chiles into strips. Quarter onion slices.
- 4 Meanwhile, add beans, tomatoes, and cilantro to bowl with penne. Add grilled vegetables and Lime Vinaigrette. Toss to combine. Cover and chill 2 to 24 hours. When ready to serve, let stand at room temperature 30 minutes. Top salad with avocado and pepitas. Serve with lime wedges.