

# STAYING (FOOD)SAFE THIS SUMMER



by B. Kay Sugg

Few things are as satisfying as eating outdoors on a summer day with friends and family. From grilling out to potluck meals, summer food is almost guaranteed to be fabulous. So, while you dream of your next summer cookouts, parties, reunions, camping trips, and other events involving food, now is a good time to review food safety guidelines to ensure the safety of your family and friends.

## **Easy guidelines to follow for food safety:**

- Perishable food should not sit out for more than 2 hours. In very hot weather (above 90°F), it should never sit out for more than 1 hour.
- Most bacteria do not multiply rapidly at temperatures below 40°F or above 140°F, so, it is very important to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. The danger zone is the temperature range between these two numbers when bacteria can multiply rapidly.
- Be diligent about avoiding cross-contamination. Juices that drip from raw meats and poultry onto other foods (or that are present on your hands after handling raw meats) can spread bacteria. Also, be sure to separate raw meats, eggs, and seafood from other foods in your grocery bags and in your refrigerator to eliminate the risk of cross-contamination.
- Never reuse utensils, plates, or other items that have touched or held raw meat or poultry without washing them thoroughly first.
- Do not rely on color to tell you if the food has been cooked enough to kill pathogens. According to research done by the US Department of Agriculture, 1 in 4 hamburgers turn brown before reaching a safe internal temperature.
- Whether cooking food on a stove, grill, or portable camping stove, it must be cooked to a high enough internal temperature to kill any bacteria that could cause illness. What are these temperatures?
  - Steaks, roasts and chops** should be cooked to a minimum 145°F as measured by a food thermometer, and should have a 3-minute rest period after cooking.
  - Ground meats including beef, veal, lamb, and pork**, should be cooked to 160°F and do not require a rest time.
  - Beef, veal, and lamb** cuts should also be cooked to a minimum of 145°F and have a 3-minute rest period after cooking.
  - Chicken and all other poultry** should be cooked to an internal temperature of 165°F. (To find more details about times and temperatures for cooking and roasting other meats, visit <https://www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-charts/meat-poultry-charts>.)

The best way to protect from food-borne illness is to always use a thermometer to check on the internal temperature of meats and other food when cooking. For meats, the thermometer should be inserted into the thickest part of the food—making sure that it does not touch the bone, fat, or gristle. For combination foods such as casseroles, place the thermometer into the thickest portion or into the dish's center. A combination dish containing egg, ground meat, or poultry should have the temperature checked in several places.



Sources:  
Food Safety.Gov, at <https://www.foodsafety.gov>

USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service at  
<https://www.fsis.usda.gov>



# MEDITERRANEAN BEAN SALAD

This colorful and crunchy Mediterranean Bean Salad is the perfect side salad! It'll take you through picnic and barbecue season with ease, and you'll want to make up a big batch to keep in the fridge for quick and healthy lunches, too. It's packed with protein!

## INGREDIENTS

- 15 ounce can of cannellini beans, drained and well rinsed
- 15 ounce can of garbanzo beans (chickpeas) drained and well rinsed
- 1 cup cherry tomato halves
- 2 small Persian cucumbers, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced
- 1/4 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup peppadew peppers, rough chopped
- 1/2 cup black olives, halved
- 1/2 cup pimento stuffed green olives, halved
- 1 cup assorted colorful bell peppers, diced
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/2 cup chopped marinated artichokes
- about 10 large basil leaves, shredded

## DRESSING

- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 4 Tbsp red wine vinegar, or more to taste
- 1 tsp dried Italian herbs, such as thyme, oregano, and rosemary
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- salt and fresh cracked black pepper to taste

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whisk the dressing ingredients together and taste to adjust any of them. Add more vinegar if you want a tangier flavor. Set aside.
2. Put the beans in a large salad bowl. Add the rest of the ingredients and toss with a generous amount of the dressing.
3. The salad will keep, well covered, for several days in the refrigerator.

## NOTES

Those delicious cannellini beans are delicate! Be gentle when you rinse and toss them. This is a great salad to store in mason jars for grab and go lunches!

**Prep Time:** 15 minutes  
**Category:** appetizer, salad  
**Cuisine:** Mediterranean  
**Yield:** serves 8  
**Calories per serving:** 265

Source: <https://theviewfromgreatisland.com/mediterranean-bean-salad-recipe>

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