

## ***Italian Antipasti Pasta Salad*** from *Urban Sacred Garden*



My favorite styles of food in the world are American Southern and Italian. I spent a month in Italy roaming the streets and taking a cooking class here and there. I learned to appreciate the art of simple ingredients that speak for themselves, particularly when using fresh herbs from the garden.

This dish combines some of the best Italian necessities – cheese, meat, fresh veggies, pasta, olive oil and basil. What more can you ask for? The variety of simple flavors in this dish are stellar. It is like an afternoon siesta in my mouth. But not in a sleepy, boring way, because I adore sleeping. It is a pure delight of pleasure on my palate.

### **INGREDIENTS**

14 oz. Pasta (any bite sized pasta of your choice), cooked and drained  
10 oz. Grape Tomatoes, halved  
2 Large Carrots, cut into bite sized chunks  
2 Celery Sticks, finely diced  
1 Yellow Pepper, medium dice  
1 Tbsp Garlic, finely diced  
10 Fresh Basil Leaves, coarsely chopped  
3 oz. Genoa Salami, chopped  
1/4 lb. Asiago Cheese, cut into small cubes  
1/2 Cup Parmesan, shaved or shredded  
1/2 lb. Fresh Mozzarella (marinated in olive oil and chopped basil), cut into medium pieces, reserve 4 Tbsp oil and add to salad  
1 Cup Italian Dressing  
Fresh Ground Sea Salt  
Fresh Ground Black Pepper

### **DIRECTIONS**

1. Cook pasta in salted water until al dente (slightly chewy). Drain quickly to prevent additional cooking. Rinse thoroughly with cool water to chill pasta. Put pasta in a large serving bowl.
2. Add the above ingredients to the bowl and toss to combine. Add salt and pepper to taste. Add additional Italian Dressing if needed to thoroughly coat pasta and veggies.
3. Refrigerate and serve chilled. Enjoy!