

# Bean & Barley Salad with Summer Herbs

Serves 6-8 | 15 minutes prep + 40 minutes cook time

Plant researchers at Oregon State University Barley World (yes that's the real name) are working to reintroduce eaters to naked barley. Varieties that easily shed their tough outer hull—known as naked or hullless barleys—have been around forever, but not widely cultivated as a food crop. The more common pearled barley has been stripped of its tough hull, a process that also eliminates most of the nutrients and fiber. Pearled barley lands in the same category as white rice or industrial bread, an incomplete carbohydrate best eaten only occasionally.

When Anthony & Carol Boutard started growing barley, they planted small plots of several different varieties to see what grew well at their Willamette Valley farm and, more important, what tastes best. After a couple of harvests, they still couldn't decide, so they kept growing them all. Their Ayers Creek Migration Barley includes naked barleys from Japan, Nepal, Italy, Arabia, and North Africa, and it's delicious. The mix of light and dark colored berries looks pretty, too.

Wellspend founder Jim Dixon thinks everyone should always have cooked beans in the refrigerator, mostly because they're delicious but also so you can avoid using canned beans. "Beans from a can just don't have the flavor you get when you cook good dried beans," he says. That stash also makes throwing a salad like this one together easy.

Sugar snap peas come and go quickly in the late spring and early summer, and if you miss their short season just leave them out. The secret to bean and grain salads is lots of herbs, so use more if you feel like it.

**1 cup cooked chickpeas**

**½ cup Ayers Creek Migration Barley**

**½ lb sugar snap peas**

**2 thin-skinned Persian-style cucumbers**

**2 shallots**

**¼ cup capers, preferably salt-packed**

**1-2 tablespoons Calabrian chile paste or chopped Mama Lil's peppers**

**1 bunch cilantro**

**2 cups arugula**

**¼ cup extra virgin olive oil**

**3 tablespoons good wine vinegar**

**Step 1** In a saucepan, combine the barley with enough well-salted water to keep it covered by a couple of inches. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for about 40 minutes or until the grains are tender. Drain and let cool.

**Step 2** Drop the snap peas into salted boiling water and cook for about a minute, then drain and cut into 2 or 3 pieces. Smash the cucumbers\* or cut them into small, bite-sized pieces. Slice the shallots thinly, and soak the salt-packed capers in cold water for 10 minutes, then drain. Chop the cilantro, including the stems.

**Step 3** Combine the chickpeas, barley, vegetables, cilantro, and arugula in a large bowl. Add the olive oil, vinegar, and salt. Toss well and taste, adding more oil, vinegar, and salt to your liking. Serve at room temperature.

\* To smash the cucumbers, trim any stems from the cucumbers, place them in a plastic produce bag, and smash them with something heavy (a small cast iron skillet, rolling pin, empty wine bottle, or similar blunt force object). Dump the smashed cukes onto a cutting board and use a large knife to cut them into bite-sized pieces.