

Octopus salad

Octopus is eaten all over the Mediterranean and across the world. It's a versatile seafood that can be chargrilled, braised and eaten in salads. It has a milder flavor to squid but is similar in texture. Because of its robust texture it can take on strong flavours like garlic and chili. This recipe has influences taken from Italy and Spain.

For this recipe it is a good idea to tenderize the octopus. The best method for this recipe is to make a very weak brine (about 2% salt dissolved into water) and allow the octopus to soak for about 2 hours.

Ingredients

For cooking the octopus

700g (approx) English octopus cleaned
700ml water
200ml white wine
100ml white wine vinegar
1 carrot
1 shallot
2 celery sticks
½ lemon
3 star anis
1 bouquet garni (bay rosemary and thyme tied up together)

For the salad

2 large tomatoes (such as San Marzano) de-seeded and diced
¼ cucumber de-seeded and diced
1 shallot finely diced
1 tblsp pitted black olives cut in half
100g cooked butter beans
2 tblsp finely chopped parsley
juice and zest of ½ a lemon
pinch of salt

Method:

For the octopus

- Remove the octopus from the brine and rinse
- Put the water and peeled washed vegetables and herbs into a large heavy bottomed pan
- Bring to the boil, reduce heat to a simmer and cook for 2.5 hours approx, you can test it by taking a piece out cutting a small bit off and check its tender by eating it, one of those advantages of being the chef
- When it's cooked allow it to cool in the cooking liquid (to room temperature is best)
- Cut the octopus up into bit sized pieces trying to keep the shape

To build the salad

- This couldn't be easier
- Just add all the ingredients into a mixing bowl and give a good but gentle mix
- Taste for salt and lemon

Tip:

Once you've cooked the octopus you can pretty much use any type of salad ingredients such as green beans, chillies, artichokes or capers. Even though this salad is a cold salad it is best served at room temperature rather than cold from the fridge. Remember SANDYS will always clean the octopus for you.

