



Couscous with Blistered Green Bean and Peach Salad and Cilantro Oil

The cilantro oil has a little bit of a jump from crushed red pepper flakes. My friend said it wasn't enough to call it "spicy" but those sensitive to heat might disagree.

If you have any cilantro oil left after you make this, refrigerate it and serve it with some crusty bread for dipping or save it for your next salad dressing. Use it within 2 days.

Serves 3 to 4

One 10-ounce box couscous (about 1 3/4 cups, Moroccan-style, not pearled)
1 tablespoon unsalted butter (optional)
Fine sea salt
1 large ripe peach
1 medium yellow onion

Recipe by Kristin Donnelly from missiondinner.substack.com

8 ounces green beans
½ cup plus 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1 loosely packed cup cilantro leaves and tender stems
½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
2 tablespoons Champagne or white wine vinegar
¼ cup shelled pistachios, for sprinkling

Cook the couscous

In a medium heavy pot with a lid, combine 2 cups water with the butter (if using) and ½ teaspoon salt and bring to a boil. When it boils, stir in the couscous, then turn off the heat and cover.

Set a timer for 5 minutes. When the timer goes off, uncover the couscous and use a wooden spoon or fork to fluff the couscous and break up any chunks.

(Or refer to your package instructions.)

Put the lid halfway over the pot to allow some of the steam to escape while keeping the couscous moist as you prepare the rest of the dish. (It's ok if it cools to room temperature.)

Meanwhile, prep the vegetables

Cut the peach into bite-sized pieces.

Thinly slice the onion vertically. To do so: Cut off the stem end and root end from the onion. Stand up the onion on one of the flat sides and cut the onion in half. Peel the onion. With one of the flat sides of the onion facing toward you, thinly slice the onion.

Remove any stems from the green beans

Cook the vegetables

In a large, heavy skillet, such as cast-iron, heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion and spread out the slices so they're as close to a single layer as possible and let cook without moving for 2 minutes, until starting to brown on the bottom. Sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned and just tender, about 2 minutes longer. Transfer to a bowl.

Add another 1 tablespoon olive oil, then add the green beans in as close as a single layer as possible. Cook again without moving for 2 minutes, until they start to blister and brown on the

bottom. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes until browned all over. Add the green beans to the onions.

Make the cilantro oil and finish the dish

Finely chop the cilantro and transfer to a small bowl. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup oil, the red pepper flakes, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt.

Add the peaches and the vinegar to the onions and green beans and lightly toss.

Add half the cilantro oil to the couscous and stir it in well, fluffing and separating the grains.

Transfer the couscous to a large shallow serving bowl or platter. Arrange the green beans salad on top. Spoon over about 2 tablespoons of the cilantro oil.

Roughly chop the pistachios, sprinkle over the salad, and serve, passing the remaining cilantro oil at the table.

The short version

- Cook the couscous.
- Cut the peach, thinly slice the onion vertically, and trim the green beans.
- In a large, heavy skillet, such as cast-iron, heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil over medium-high heat. Cook the onion in a single layer without moving for 2 minutes. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt and cook, stirring, until just tender, another 2 minutes. Repeat the process with the green beans.
- In a small bowl, mix together finely chopped cilantro, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup oil, the red pepper flakes, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt.
- Add the peaches and the vinegar to the onions and green beans and lightly toss.
- Add half the cilantro oil to the couscous.
- Serve the green bean salad over the couscous, drizzled with some of the cilantro oil. Sprinkle with chopped pistachios.

Fun for kids

- Pull the cilantro.
- Fluff the couscous.
- Mix the cilantro oil.
- Sprinkle the pistachios.

Swaps

- Instead of peaches, use plums.
- Instead of a yellow onion, use a red onion.
- Instead of couscous, you could make this with quinoa or a dry, fluffy rice, like basmati.
- Instead of cilantro, try dill, parsley, or mint. (Or a mix.) Each will add a different vibe but they will be good.
- Instead of pistachios, try toasted sliced almonds or toasted, chopped pecans.
- Instead of crushed red pepper, try sliced fresh red chile. (Or if you don't want anything spicy, leave it all out.)

Bonus points

- To add a bit more protein, toss some chickpeas or white beans in with the salad. (You might want to up the vinegar as well. Taste to see.)
- If you prefer, you could certainly serve this as a side dish alongside some fish or chicken.
- If you have some cherry tomatoes lying around, halve them and add to the salad with the peaches.
- If you want a raw garlic flavor, mince some to add to the cilantro oil.