



## Warm Asparagus and Bean Salad with Burrata and Garlic Toasts

Serves 3 to 4

- 1 bunch medium-thick asparagus (about 1 pound)
- 1 large shallot
- 5 to 8 pickled onions from a jar of cornichons or cocktail onions (optional)
- 1 small bulb spring garlic or 1 fat, juicy garlic clove (optional)
- 4 large slices sourdough bread or other country-style bread
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup plus 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil for cooking, plus a high-quality olive oil, for drizzling
- Fine salt
- One 15-ounce can cannellini beans (or about 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cooked, salted beans)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup loosely packed mint leaves
- About 10 chives, with flowers if you have them! (optional)
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 to 2 balls burrata (4 to 8 ounces)
- Flaky salt, for finishing

## Prep the vegetables

Snap off the woody ends of the asparagus, then cut the spears crosswise into ¼-inch-thick coins.

Peel the shallot and cut it in half lengthwise through the root. Thinly slice the shallot into half moons.

Thinly slice or finely chop the pickled onions, depending on whether you want larger bites of the pickled onion or the flavor of them woven throughout.

Cut your spring garlic bulb or garlic clove in half.

## Make the garlic toasts

Arrange a rack so it's just a few inches from the broiler, then preheat the broiler in your oven or toaster oven.

Cut the bread slices in half crosswise and arrange them so they're in a single layer on a baking sheet. (If you're using a toaster oven, you might need to broil in batches.)

Brush both sides of the bread slices with ¼ cup olive oil.

Broil, watching it well, until golden on top, about 2 minutes. Flip the slices and broil until golden, 1 to 2 minutes longer.

Remove the toasts from the oven, and when they're just cool enough to handle, rub the garlic all over one side of the toasts, then sprinkle them with salt.

## Make the warm asparagus salad

In a deep skillet, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil. Add the shallot, season with salt, and cook until softened and just starting to brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the asparagus and stir to coat with the oil and shallots. Cook, stirring, until the pieces start to turn bright green, about 1 minute. Add the drained white beans and gently stir to warm through. Turn off the heat.

Thinly slice the chives and mint leaves. Pull apart any chive flowers.

Stir in the pickled onions as well as most of the mint and chives. Taste and season with salt and pepper.

## Plate and serve.

Pile the asparagus salad on a platter. Cut the burrata ball(s) into four pieces and arrange them on top. Sprinkle with more mint and chives.

Drizzle the top with some nice olive oil. Grind a bit more black pepper on top and sprinkle the burrata with some flaky salt.

Serve immediately.

## The short version

- Cut the asparagus into coins. Thinly slice the shallot. Slice or chop the pickled onions. Halve the garlic.
- Brush the toasts with olive oil and broil on both sides until golden. Rub with the garlic and season with salt.
- In a deep skillet, cook the shallot in olive oil, seasoning with salt. Add the asparagus and cook for a minute. Add the beans and cook until warm. Remove from the heat and add most of the mint and chives. Season with salt and pepper.
- Serve the salad on a platter and top with the burrata as well as more herbs, pepper, flaky salt, and olive oil.

## Fun for kids

- Snap off the ends of the asparagus.
- Drain the white beans.
- Brush the olive oil on the bread and rub the garlic on the toasts.
- Sprinkle in the herbs.
- Cut the burrata.
- Grind the pepper.

## Swaps

- Instead of cannellini beans, you could use Great Northern beans or other white bean.
- Instead of a shallot, use a spring onion or ¼ of a small red onion.
- Instead of the pickled onions, try another pickled vegetable chopped fine.
- Instead of mint, try tarragon (use half) or basil.
- If you can't find burrata, just skip it!

## Bonus points

- If you want some lemon flavor without lemon juice, add some finely grated lemon zest to the salad.
- For a little more heat, add some crushed red pepper.
- Add some baby greens (like arugula or mustards) to the salad just after you pull it off the heat so they wilt.