

A SALAD NICOISE

Recipe by Greg Atkinson, author of **In Season, The Northwest Essentials Cookbook, and the upcoming Greg Atkinson's Northwest Menu Cookbook** (to be published by Sasquatch Books in the fall of '05.)

(Serves four as a first course or two as a main course)

1 7-ounce tin tuna, packed in olive oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
olive oil, as needed
1 head green leaf or Boston lettuce
2 medium yellow-fleshed potatoes, about 8 ounces each
3 cups water
1 tablespoon kosher salt
1 pound fresh green beans, trimmed
4 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and quartered lengthwise
1 pint cherry tomatoes, leaves removed
1 cup pitted Nicoise or Saracena olives
Sea salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

1. Drain the tuna and reserve the oil in which it was packed to make a salad dressing. Measure the oil and add enough olive oil to measure 1/3 of a cup. In a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar and oil and set aside.
2. Break the lettuce into individual leaves; rinse and spin dry. Cover the prepared lettuce with a damp paper towel and keep it in the refrigerator until just before serving.
3. Cut the potatoes into 1-inch dice. Put the dice in a small saucepan and cover the potatoes with water and the tablespoon of kosher salt. Cook over high heat until the water is boiling, then reduce heat to low and cook until the potatoes are tender but not falling apart, about 10 minutes. Lift the potatoes out of the boiling water with a slotted spoon, and use the same water to cook the green beans until they are bright green and slightly tender, about five minutes. Drain the beans and spread them on a baking sheet in a single layer so that they will cool; do not rinse off the salty water in which they were boiled.
4. While the potatoes are still warm, toss them with the oil and vinegar; they will absorb some of the dressing. Lift the potatoes out of the dressing with a slotted spoon and put them in the refrigerator to chill. Reserve the rest of the dressing.
5. Distribute the lettuce evenly between the plates. Distribute the tuna evenly among the plates. Arrange small mounds of dressed potatoes and bundles of green beans beside the tuna and drizzle whatever dressing remains of the oil and vinegar dressing over the arranged salads, taking care to get some on each heap of tuna. Garnish each salad with cherry tomatoes and sprinkle salt and pepper all around.

Note: Consider St. Jude's albacore canned in casa brina olive oil for this recipe. Those who love dill with their green beans might consider our canned albacore with dill. Also especially delicious: our canned albacore with jalapeno.