

# ASIAN COLD NOODLE SALAD

This salad is a favourite of mine. It has lots of texture thanks to the crunchy Asian fried noodles, which are available from supermarkets in the Asian ingredient section. The tangy Asian-style dressing can also be served with meats and fish.

## Serves 4-6

- 100 g (3½ oz) baby spinach leaves, washed
- 1 Lebanese (short) cucumber, trimmed and sliced
- 2 spring onions (scallions), ends trimmed, thinly sliced
- 50 g (1¾ oz) snow pea (mangetout) sprouts
- ¼ cup mint leaves
- 100 g (3½ oz) young sugar snap peas, trimmed
- 50 g (1¾ oz) Asian fried noodles

## NUOC MAM CHAM DRESSING

- 60 ml (2 fl oz/¼ cup) fish sauce
- 60 ml (2 fl oz/¼ cup) rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons caster (superfine) sugar
- 125 ml (4 fl oz/½ cup) water
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 long red chilli, seeded and thinly sliced (see helpful hint)
- 2 tablespoons lime juice

1 Put the spinach leaves, cucumber, spring onions and snow pea sprouts in a large salad bowl. Top with the mint, sugar snap peas, then noodles.

2 To make the nuoc mam cham dressing, put the fish sauce, rice vinegar, sugar and water in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring to dissolve the sugar, until just below boiling point (small bubbles will start to form around the edge of the pan). Set aside to cool.

3 Add the garlic, chilli and lime juice to the dressing and stir well. Pour 2-3 tablespoons of the dressing over the salad. (The remaining dressing will keep, in a sealed container in the refrigerator, for up to 3 days.)

### HELPFUL HINT

Always wear disposable or rubber gloves when handling chillies. There are many varieties of chilli and each has a different strength of heat. Large red chillies available from supermarkets are mild. The hottest part of a chilli is the seeds and membrane attached to them, so remove these if you