

VIVA PEPPERS: Once you starting adding peppers – cooked or raw – to your meals, you'll be hooked!

Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions:

Ingredients:

- 1-2 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3-4 large red and green bell peppers, stemmed, seeded, and cut into thin strips
- 1-2 large onions cut into thin strips
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Place oil in a large, deep skillet and turn heat to medium-high; 1 minute later, add peppers and onions. Cook, stirring occasionally, until peppers and onions are lightly browned and very tender. Season with salt and pepper.



MAIN DISHES Using Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions:

Chicken Fajitas:

Turn Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions into a Main Meal:

Ingredients:

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- Fajita Seasoning Mix (recipe below)
- 2 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 tortillas: flour, corn or whole wheat
- 3 cups Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions
- Sour cream
- Sliced green onions
- Grated cheese

Directions:

Cut chicken into strips and season with mix.
Place oil in a large, deep skillet and turn heat to medium-high; 1 minute later, add chicken strips. Cook for 2-3 minutes. Turn chicken with spatula and cook for another 2-3 minutes.
If pan is dry, add about 2-3 Tablespoons of water.
Cook until chicken is cooked through. Add the Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions.
Cook until mixture is heated through.



To Serve:

Wrap chicken strips and sautéed peppers and onions in a tortilla. Serve with salsa, grated cheese, sour cream and sliced green onions.

Fajita Seasoning Mix:

This spicy blend can be stored in a sealed container for future use.

Ingredients:

- 2 Tablespoons chili powder
- 1 Tablespoon salt
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- ½ teaspoon cumin.

Directions:

Mix well. Sprinkle on chicken pieces. Use this mix liberally if you want more spiciness, and use less if desired.
Add about ¼ cup of water to the seasoned chicken while you are cooking it if you want more sauce.

Southwest Pasta with Peppers and Onions

Turn Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions into a main meal:

Ingredients:

- 1 pound cooked pasta, any shape, drained
- 1 cup Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions
- 1 can of seasoned diced canned tomatoes (a southwest flavor such as roasted garlic is good)
- 1 cup diced cooked chicken
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ cup Parmesan cheese, grated

Directions:

In a large bowl, combine the pasta, sautéed vegetables, canned tomatoes, chicken, salt and pepper. Pour into serving bowls and sprinkle with parmesan cheese.



Note: This makes great leftovers, even cold as a pasta salad

Scrambled Eggs with Peppers and Onions

Turn Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions into a breakfast meal:

Ingredients:

- 2-3 large eggs
- 2 Tablespoons milk
- 2 teaspoons butter
- ½ cup Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

- Crack eggs into bowl.
- Add milk and beat lightly with a fork.
- Preheat a large heavy skillet for 3 to 5 minutes over medium-low heat.
- When pan is heated, add butter.
- When butter is melted, pour in eggs.
- When eggs have set on the bottom, begin to stir eggs, lifting the cooked portions to the top.
- When eggs are nearly cooked, add sautéed peppers and onions.
- Cook until egg is set.
- Season with salt and pepper to taste.



Breakfast Burrito

Turn Scrambled Eggs with Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions into another breakfast meal:

Ingredients:

- Scrambled Eggs with Peppers and Onions
- ¼ cup grated cheddar cheese
- 1 large tortilla: flour, whole wheat or corn
- 2 Tablespoons salsa
- 2 teaspoons sliced green onions

Directions:

- When egg and vegetable mixture (from recipe above) is still hot and in the pan, add the grated cheddar cheese and allow to melt.
- Scoop mixture onto tortilla.
- Roll up and top with salsa and green onions.



SIDE DISHES Using Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions:

Zucchini, Corn, Peppers and Onions:

Turn Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions into a delicious side dish:

Ingredients:

- 1 Tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 2-3 small zucchinis, sliced
- 1 cup frozen corn, thawed
- 1 cup Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions

Directions:

- Place oil in a skillet and turn heat to medium-high.
- When pan is hot, add sliced zucchini.
- Cook, stirring occasionally, until tender and lightly browned.
- Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- Add corn, Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions and heat through.

Variation:

- Add one diced, cored and seeded jalapeno pepper to the zucchini while cooking.
- This will add a little heat and a lot of flavor.



Using Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions as a CONDIMENT:

Steaks, Burgers and Dogs with Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions

Use Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions as a condiment to spice up many meat dishes:

Top off steaks, burgers or hotdogs/bratwurst with a heaping portion of Simple Sautéed Peppers and Onions.



Using Raw Peppers:

Hummus with Pepper Strips:

Try this flavorful dip with fresh vegetables, pita bread “triangles,” or as a sandwich spread.

If you don’t have time to make hummus from scratch, it is available commercially.

It’s especially tasty with pepper strips, cucumbers, jicama, and carrots.

Yield: about 3 cups

Ingredients:

- 2 16-oz cans garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 1/3 c tahini *
- 1 tsp salt
- Juice of 1 lemon
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper, ground
- ¼ tsp cumin, ground
- ¼ tsp black pepper, ground
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 handful parsley
- 3-4 green onions, cut into 1” pieces
- Water as needed (about 1/3 cup)



Directions:

- Place all ingredients in food processor or blender.
- Add water as needed to form a smooth paste.
- Adjust seasonings to taste.

To Serve:

- Garnish with chopped peppers or a sprinkle of cayenne pepper if desired.

- * Tahini is a smooth paste made from sesame seeds.
It is usually found by the peanut butter in grocery stores.

Southwestern Coleslaw

Makes 10 servings

Ingredients:

1 head cabbage, shredded or chopped
1 lime, cut in half
1 green or red pepper, chopped
1 bunch cilantro, chopped
1-2 jalapeno peppers, chopped fine
½ C olive oil or canola oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Optional ingredients:

Corn, tomatoes, red or green onions



Directions:

Place cabbage in large mixing bowl. Squeeze lime juice over cabbage and stir well. Add remaining ingredients and mix well. Add salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate until flavors blend. Garnish with pepper rings and a sprinkle of chili powder if desired.

Note:

Recipe can be halved, but this salad keeps in the refrigerator for several days and just seems to get better as it “ages.”

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More **Viva Vegetables** recipes and related videos can be accessed at <http://usuextensionfoodpreparation.blogspot.com/>

