A Tuesday Two-Bean Salad

Recipe by Eastern Market Head Chef Aaron Egan

Eastern Market offers cooking classes every Tuesday this summer, with sold-out kids’ classes in the morning, and a rapidly-selling set of adult-oriented classes in the afternoon. After cooking blueberry jam and hot pepper jelly for the better part of 8 hours, I cast my eyes around the kitchen to find what might be a good summer afternoon dish. Beans are high in protein and fiber, and the state of Michigan produces 12 different varieties of beans for commercial sale – some at vendors here at Eastern Market. A cold bean salad, featuring some fresh flavors of early summer and a bright citrus vinaigrette, seemed a very appropriate way to finish the day off. I think the coworkers who ate this salad would agree wholeheartedly.

1 cup cherry tomatoes, sliced in half
1 cup dark kidney beans, canned or cooked from dry
1 cup garbanzo beans, canned or cooked from dry
½ cup sweet onion, small diced
2 Tablespoons parsley, chopped roughly
1 Tablespoon radish, cut into julienne

2 Tablespoons lemon juice, freshly squeezed
1 Tablespoon red wine vinegar
2 Tablespoons honey
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 teaspoons salt
⅛ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1. Place all the ingredients for the vinaigrette in a mason jar and shake well to combine.
2. If using canned beans, make sure to rinse them well and let them drain. Combine all salad ingredients in a bowl, and dress lightly with the vinaigrette. Mix well, and season with salt and pepper to taste. You can use a mix of additional seasonings – I used a mix of 2 parts each salt, cayenne pepper, ground mustard, and 1 part each cumin and Hungarian paprika – if you like. Season lightly, taste, and continue
to season until it tastes right. The salt shouldn’t be noticeable, but all the other flavors should come into focus.
3. Taste immediately before service, and add a small amount of freshly-squeezed lemon juice to brighten all the flavors if needed.

Serve chilled. Store any leftovers, or a prepared salad, for up to 5 days in a tightly sealed container in the fridge. Additional time to marinate will result in a more deeply-flavored salad.