

Bite Spoon

Street Corn Pasta Salad: Amazing Recipe

20 min Prep time	**15 min** Cook time	**35 min** Total time
8 Servings	**Easy** Difficulty	**Mexican** Cuisine

Ingredients

For the Pasta Salad

- [ ] 1 lb short pasta (like rotini, fusilli, or cavatappi)
- [ ] 4 ears of fresh corn, husks removed
- [ ] 1 tbsp olive oil
- [ ] 1/2 cup crumbled cotija cheese
- [ ] 1/2 cup finely chopped red onion
- [ ] 1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- [ ] 1 jalapeño, finely diced (optional, for heat)

For the Creamy Dressing

- [ ] 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- [ ] 1/2 cup sour cream or plain Greek yogurt
- [ ] Juice of 2 limes (about 1/4 cup)
- [ ] 1 clove garlic, minced
- [ ] 1 tsp chili powder
- [ ] 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- [ ] 1/2 tsp salt, or to taste
- [ ] 1/4 tsp black pepper
- [ ] Tajín seasoning for garnish (optional)

Instructions

1. First, let's get the pasta going. Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a rolling boil. It really should taste like the ocean! Add your pasta and cook according to the package directions until it's al dente—tender with just a slight bite. Once it's done, drain it well but please don't rinse it! That lovely starch on the pasta will help our creamy dressing cling to every beautiful spiral. While the pasta is cooking, sometimes I'll even make a loaf of savory zucchini bread while I wait; the kitchen just feels so productive and smells amazing.

2. Now for that gorgeous, smoky corn. You can do this on a grill or in a skillet. If using a skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the corn kernels in a single layer (you might need to do this in two batches to avoid crowding the pan). Let them cook, stirring only occasionally, for about 5-7 minutes, until they're tender and you see lovely charred, blackened bits. That char is pure flavor! Once done, scrape the kernels into a large mixing bowl to cool down a bit.

3. While the corn cools slightly, let's whisk up the heart of the salad: the dressing. In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, sour cream, fresh lime juice, minced garlic, chili powder, smoked paprika, salt, and pepper. Whisk it all together until it's smooth, creamy, and completely blended. Take a little taste here—does it need more salt? A little more lime? Adjust it until it makes you happy. This is your creation, after all.

4 It's time to bring everything together. To the large bowl with the charred corn, add the drained pasta, the chopped red onion, the fresh cilantro, and about half of the crumbled cotija cheese. Pour that beautiful creamy dressing all over the top. Using a large spoon or spatula, gently fold and toss everything together until every single piece of pasta is coated in the dressing. The simple act of combining these ingredients feels so wholesome. It reminds me of the fresh simplicity of my favorite zucchini lemon pasta.

5 For the finishing touches, transfer the salad to your serving bowl. Sprinkle the remaining cotija cheese over the top, and if you're using it, give it a lovely dusting of Tajín for that extra tangy, colorful flair. You can serve this salad warm, at room temperature, or chilled. I personally think it's best after it has had about 30 minutes for all the flavors to get to know each other. It's a moment of pause before the enjoyment begins.

Nutrition per serving

420 kcal	12 g	45 g	22 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- To get the corn kernels off the cob easily, stand the cob upright in the center of a large bowl and use a sharp knife to slice downwards. The bowl cleverly catches all the flying kernels, which is a neat little trick that saves on cleanup.
- The dressing can be made up to three days in advance and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Having it ready to go makes assembly on the day of serving so incredibly quick and stress-free. If you have extra zucchini, you could even make some zucchini noodles for another meal.
- Don't be shy with the fresh herbs. The cilantro adds such a bright, clean flavor that cuts through the richness of the dressing. If you're not a fan of cilantro, fresh parsley or even some finely chopped chives would also be a lovely substitute.
- For the best flavor, let the salad sit for at least 20-30 minutes before serving. This gives the pasta a chance to absorb some of the dressing and allows all the individual flavors to meld together into a harmonious, delicious whole. It's a small step that makes a big difference.