

Vietnamese Salad Rolls

Think of Vietnamese salad rolls as compact see-through salads. Brittle rice papers turn translucent when soaked in water, like a sheer curtain, revealing what's inside in a soft light. These rolls are ubiquitous in Vietnamese restaurants and are simply what's typically found in a salad, rolled up in rice paper and served with a bright, zippy dipping sauce. As for the bresaola, well, why not? This could even be a fun way to get the kids to finally eat their veggies.

Ingredients

Dipping Sauce

3 to 4 tablespoons fresh lime juice
3 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons fish sauce
3 tablespoons brown sugar
1 Thai bird chile, thinly sliced

Rolls

3 1/2 ounces rice noodles
1 large carrot, cut in 4-inch lengths
1/2 English cucumber, cut in 4-inch lengths
8 rice paper wrappers
8 small leaves butter lettuce
24 slices bresaola (6 ounces)
Fresh mint leaves
Fresh tender cilantro stems and leaves

Directions

for the dipping sauce

Stir the lime juice, water, fish sauce, brown sugar and chile together to dissolve the sugar.

for the rolls

Add the rice noodles to a saucepan of boiling water and cook according to package instructions, until translucent, 3 to 5 minutes. Drain and rinse to cool. Cut with kitchen shears into 4-inch lengths.

Julienne the carrots and cucumbers on a mandoline.

Fill a round dish or bowl large enough to hold a rice paper with some lukewarm water. Slip a rice paper into the water to soften. Place on counter. On the bottom third (leaving about 1 inch from the edge on each side) of the rice paper, place a lettuce leaf, 3 slices of bresaola, several cucumber and carrot sticks, 1/4 cup of noodles, a few sprigs of cilantro and 4 or 5 mint leaves. Take the bottom of the wrapper and fold, starting from the sides in, and roll the ingredients into a tight roll.

Repeat with the remaining ingredients. Serve with the dipping sauce.

total time: 30 minutes

active prep: 30 minutes

serves: 4

difficulty: *easy*