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THE GREAT BRITISH CUKE-OFF: TOKYO DRIFT

Fast & Furious flavor.

English Cucumber Salad • Sesame-Tahini-Miso Dressing • 10 Minutes, Start to Finish



Summer is cucumber season. If you've ever eaten one straight off the vine, or picked one up fresh at a farmers market, you already know the difference. Food tastes better when it's actually in season — and that's not just an opinion, it's chemistry. A cucumber picked yesterday from a backyard garden is going to beat a cucumber that traveled halfway around the world back in January, every single time. "Eat the season" isn't just a saying. There's real truth in it.

The best part about this salad? You can take it in a dozen different directions and it will still work. Tonight it's got an Asian lean — sesame, ginger, tahini, a little miso. Swap those out for olive oil, lemon and oregano and you've got a Greek version. Add lemongrass and Thai lime and you're headed toward Vietnam or Thailand instead. Once you understand the base idea — crisp cucumber, a bright dressing, a little crunch — you can take it almost anywhere.

This one is built around English cucumbers — specifically an heirloom British variety called Telegraph. Thinner skin, way less bitterness. It's King Street Kitchen's favorite cucumber, full stop. The tradeoff is that thin skin: it's more fragile, doesn't ship well and doesn't sit on a shelf for long, so you probably won't find it at your regular grocery store or even most farmers markets. Worth growing yourself, or asking around for a grower who does.

This whole dish takes about 10 minutes of actual hands-on work. Give the dressing a few extra minutes to rest and the flavors will thank you for it. That's the whole trade here: less time than a drive-thru run, and a lot more flavor waiting on the other end.





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INGREDIENTS & SOURCING

Serves 4 as a side • 10 minutes active • dressing benefits from a 15-minute rest



Picked fresh — English cucumber, ready for the board



Eat the season: this is where it came from



Heirloom Telegraph cucumber — thin skin, low bitterness, hard to find in stores

The Salad

- 2 English cucumbers (about 12 oz total), thinly sliced
- 1 Cubanelle pepper — red, orange or yellow — small dice
- Optional: thinly sliced red onion
- Optional: sugar snap peas or sprouts, for crunch

The Dressing

- 3 tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp avocado oil
- 1 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 1½ tsp tahini
- ½ tsp white or yellow miso
- ½ tsp fresh ginger, grated
- ½ tsp fresh garlic, grated (about 1 small clove)
- 1 tsp furikake
- Optional: a small pinch of sugar, or ½ tsp honey

Sourcing note: no English cucumber? Regular slicing cucumbers work fine — just peel them and scrape out the seeds first, since the skin and seeds are where most of the bitterness lives. Furikake is a Japanese rice seasoning — a mix of sesame seeds, seaweed and a little salt. It's optional, but it adds texture and another layer of flavor. Trader Joe's stocks it as a regular item, and it's easy to find on Amazon. This dressing also flexes hard: swap the sesame oil, tahini and miso for olive oil, lemon and oregano for a Greek take, or add lemongrass and lime for a Thai lean. Same salad, new passport.





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METHOD

Build the dressing first and let it rest while you cut the salad — the flavors need that time to meld.

Make the dressing

1. In a small bowl, combine everything except the avocado oil and the furikake: rice wine vinegar, sesame oil, tahini, miso, ginger, and garlic.
2. Whisk it together well to dissolve the miso and smooth the tahini into a consistent paste.
3. Now add the avocado oil slowly, a little at a time, whisking the whole time. This step is called emulsifying — it just means forcing the oil and vinegar (which don't naturally mix) to combine into one smooth liquid. Going slow here is what makes it come together instead of separating back out.
4. You'll know it's emulsified when the dressing turns a creamy, light beige color with tiny bubbles running through it.
5. Fold in the furikake last. Let the dressing rest while you cut the vegetables — 15 minutes is ideal, but even 5 helps.

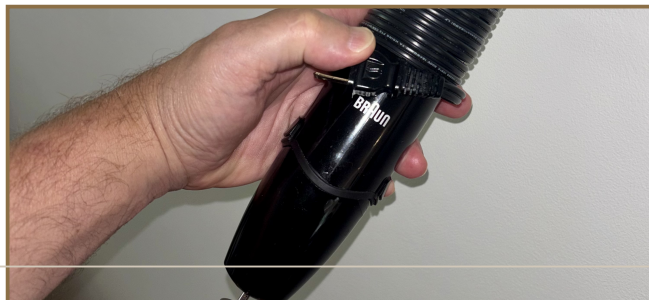
Cut the salad

6. Thinly slice the cucumbers into rounds.
7. Small-dice the Cubanelle pepper.
8. If you're using red onion, sugar snap peas, or sprouts, add them now. Remember: the rainbow is your friend. The more colors on the plate, the more nutrients you're getting — so don't be shy about adding extra veggies.

Combine, chill, serve

9. Toss the cucumber and pepper (and any extras) with the dressing until everything is coated.
10. Chill briefly if you have the time — it's good either way.
11. Finish with a pinch of salt or a crack of white pepper if you like. Both work well here, but neither is required.

Kitchen tip: a whisk attachment on a stick blender (sometimes called an immersion blender) makes emulsifying this dressing faster and easier than doing it by hand — same result, less arm work.



The whisk attachment does the emulsifying for you
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NUTRITION & THE DETAILS

Macros — per serving (serves 4, as a side)

COMPONENT	GRAMS	% CAL
Calories	105 kcal	
Protein	1 g	4%
Carbohydrate	5 g	19%
Fat	9 g	77%

This is a side dish, not the protein anchor of the meal — pair it with a fat- and protein-forward main to keep the whole plate on plan.

Key Nutrients Beyond Macros

- Vitamin K: cucumber skin is where most of it lives — another reason to leave the peel on when you can.
- Potassium: cucumbers and the Cubanelle pepper both contribute, supporting fluid balance and healthy blood pressure.
- Vitamin C: mostly from the pepper — color on the plate is a good clue to nutrients on the plate.
- Selenium & healthy fats: tahini and sesame oil bring both, along with a dose of antioxidants from fresh ginger and garlic.
- Sodium: light for a dressed dish, roughly 100–150 mg per serving from the miso and furikake. Easy to adjust down by using less of either.

Equipment

- Cutting board & chef's knife
- Mandoline (optional, for even slices)
- Microplane / zester, for the ginger and garlic
- Small mixing bowl
- Whisk (or a stick blender with a whisk attachment)
- Measuring spoons
- Large bowl, for tossing the salad

Approximate Cost

Whole recipe (serves 4 as a side): ~\$7–\$9

~\$2 per serving

Cucumbers and the pepper are the fresh cost; tahini, miso, sesame oil and furikake are pantry items that last a long time and get cheaper per use the more you cook with them.



Still on the vine — this is where flavor actually starts

