Cucumber Insalata

Serves 4

This is my take on an uber-refreshing cucumber salad at Pizzeria Delfina. Chef-owner Craig Stoll was inspired by the pungent fish sauce from Campania, colatura di alici or garum; like the fish sauce of Southeast Asia, its slightly salty hit brings out the umami in the rest of the ingredients. You can substitute fish sauce or sea salt if you don't have colatura.

4 to 6 small Japanese or Persian cucumbers, unpeeled, very thinly sliced

2 to 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped

About 1 teaspoon peeled, minced ginger

2 green onions, thinly sliced

Italian or Asian fish sauce, or sea salt, to taste (see Note)

About 2 tablespoons rice vinegar

1 to 2 teaspoons sugar or good artificial sweetener such as Splenda

1 to 2 tablespoons chopped mint

1 to 2 tablespoons chopped Thai basil

1 to 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro

Instructions: Combine all the ingredients, toss and chill; eat when the cucumbers are cold and wilty.

Note: Colatura di alici is available at Le Sanctuaire in San Francisco.

Per serving: 30 calories, 1 g protein, 6 g carbohydrate, 0 fat (0 saturated), 0 cholesterol, 4 mg sodium, 1 g fiber.