Cucumber Radish Sour Cream Cups

4 small spoon-served cucumber-radish cups, about 125–130 ml each · Active 30 min · Total 5 hr 30 min

Ingredients

- ½ cup finely diced peeled deseeded cucumber AFTER draining (80 g); prepare extra cucumber before its drain
- ¼ teaspoon fine salt (1.5 g), divided
- 1 standard ¼-ounce envelope unflavored powdered gelatin (7 g), of the specified setting strength
- 3 tablespoons cold drinking water (45 ml)
- ½ cup pasteurized whole milk (120 ml)
- ¾ cup plain pasteurized sour cream (180 g), kept cold
- ¾ cup very finely cut radish matchsticks (80 g), washed and blotted dry
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice (5 ml)
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped dill (2 g), washed and dried
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper

Set out

Small sieve over a bowl, Knife and board, Clean cloth or paper towels, Scale, Small saucepan, Mixing bowl and whisk, 4 small glasses or food-safe cups of at least 180 ml capacity with covers, Refrigerator

Allergens

Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Toss prepared cucumber with half the salt in the sieve and drain in the refrigerator 15 minutes. Press gently in a clean cloth, then weigh 80 g. Keep cold. Prepare washed dried radish and clean covered serving cups.

2. Bloom gelatin in 45 ml cold water in the small saucepan for 5–10 minutes. Add milk, warm over low heat while stirring just until completely dissolved, then take off heat before boiling.

3. Whisk 3 tablespoons cold sour cream into the warm gelatin mixture gradually. Once smooth and lukewarm, whisk this into the remaining sour cream with lemon, dill, pepper and remaining salt. Refrigerate 15–25 minutes until beginning to thicken, stirring once or twice.

4. Fold in dry cucumber and radish. Divide among four glasses, about 125–130 ml each, leaving below their rims. Cover and refrigerate at 40°F (4°C) or below for at least 4 hours until softly set throughout. The 5½-hour estimate includes draining and handling.

5. Serve cold directly in the cups with a spoon; do not dip them in warm water or attempt to unmold. Return unserved cups promptly to refrigeration.

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Gelatin starting strength

Use food-grade unflavored powdered gelatin with a manufacturer benchmark of 7 g for about 2 cups (500 ml) plain liquid. Weigh the stated grams: envelope sizes and powder density vary. A flavored dessert packet, collagen peptides, sheet gelatin or agar is not an equal substitute.

Cold service

This is an original retro-inspired recipe, not a recovered 1960s formula. Gelatin is animal-derived; the vegetable ingredients do not make the dish vegetarian. A reliable refrigerator and the stated earlier ingredient deadlines are essential.

Ingredient labels

Read milk, sour cream and gelatin labels and check relevant shared equipment.

A useful detail

The base contains 45 ml bloom water +120 ml milk +180 g sour cream +5 ml lemon, with 160 g drained/dried vegetables. Seven grams gelatin gives a soft cup set. A larger mold, drinkable dairy or wet cucumber is a different formulation and is not covered by this time or strength.

Keep it well

Keep covered at 40°F (4°C) or below. Use within 2 days of assembly or the earliest ingredient deadline, whichever comes first. Include the overnight setting period in that limit. Keep total unrefrigerated preparation and serving below 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C). Chill slices promptly after service; discard food exceeding those limits. Do not freeze; freezing damages the gel and releases water.