Tabouli
(Bulgur Wheat Salad)

This colorful, tangy dish, redolent with fresh herbs and flavored with fresh lemon juice and extra virgin olive oil, is a perfect party dish. Prepare it in the traditional way by steeping the bulgur in hot water to soften; or for a quicker method, follow the note at the end of the recipe.

Ingredients:
1 1/2 cups fine or medium bulgur wheat, soaked until soft and completely drained
3-4 tomatoes, diced
2 medium cucumbers, diced
1 cup parsley, chopped
2/3 cup fresh mint, chopped
4 green onions, sliced very thin including green tops
3-4 pressed garlic cloves or more, to taste
3 Tbsp. lemon juice, or more to taste
1/4 - 1/2 cup or more extra virgin olive oil, to taste
Salt (or garlic salt) and freshly ground black pepper

Directions:
Pour 5 cups boiling hot water over bulgur wheat in a large bowl and soak
until it is completely cool.
Transfer to a strainer or colander and drain excess water.
Squeeze the wheat dry and transfer to a large bowl.
(I usually soak the bulgur over night, and the next morning, put it into a strainer and let it stand for a few hours until completely drained and dry. In this way, you can prepare it ahead of time before dinner and not get frustrated at the last minute waiting
for the bulgur to soften.)
To the soaked bulgur, add and mix the diced tomatoes and cucumbers along with
the chopped and chopped parsley, mint, green onions and garlic.
Add lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper to taste; the tabouli should be fairly tart.
Serve cold or at room temperature.

Makes about 8 appetizer portions or 4-6 main course servings and is actually better if prepared several hours, or even the day before eating. It lasts well for several days in your refrigerator.

NOTE: For quick tabouli, cook the bulgur instead of steeping it. In a medium saucepan, combine bulgur wheat and 2 1/4 cups boiling water. Cover and cook over low heat 15 minutes or until tender. Turn out into a strainer and let cool, drain, squeeze dry and place in bowl. Continue with second paragraph above.