Very Vietnamese Summer Roll Bowls + Nuóc Chấm (Salty-Sweet Vinaigrette) + Trà Đào (Peach Iced Tea Slush)

boil+soak
Bring 5 cups of water to a boil in a large pot. Once water is boiling, remove pot from heat and add rice noodles to the pot, making sure they are completely submerged. Let noodles soak in hot water until they are soft and tender, about 5 minutes! Then drain and set aside.

shred+chop+tear
Using a box grater or food processor, shred 2 large carrots and 2 large cucumbers. Chop 1 head of romaine lettuce into strips. Chop 2 green onions. Tear half a bunch of cilantro and half a bunch of mint (no stems!).

combine+marinate+toss
Combine shredded carrots and cucumbers with Nuoc Cham Vinaigrette (see recipe below). Let marinate for about 10 minutes in a large bowl. Then add cooked and drained noodles, chopped lettuce, green onions, and torn herbs to the bowl. Toss it all together, and EAT!

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nuóc chấm salty-sweet vinaigrette

mince+cut+squeeze
Mince 1 clove garlic. Cut 2 limes and squeeze juice into a large bowl.

add+whisk
Add 3 T soy sauce, 3 T rice wine vinegar, 2 T oil, 2 T honey/sugar/agave/maple syrup, and 1 T water to the bowl. Whisk until well combined.

trà dào peach iced tea slush

combine+steep
Combine 2 C cold water and 2 bags decaf black tea in a bowl or liquid measuring cup. Let steep for about 30 minutes, then take out tea bags and discard.

chop+sprinkle
Chop 2 fresh peaches into small pieces and sprinkle with 3 T sugar or more to taste.

add+blend
Add peaches and sugar to a blender, along with the steeped tea. Add 2 C ice to the blender, and puree until smooth and thick! Taste and add more sugar if needed.
shopping list

**Very Vietnamese Summer Roll Bowls**
- 14 oz rice noodles
- 2 large carrots
- 2 large cucumbers
- 1 head romaine lettuce
- 2 green onions
- ½ bunch cilantro
- ½ bunch mint

**“Nước Chấm” Salty-Sweet Vinaigrette**
- 3 T soy sauce
- 3 T rice wine vinegar
- 2 T honey/sugar/agave/maple syrup
- 2 green onions
- ½ bunch cilantro
- ½ bunch mint
- 2 T canola or grapeseed oil
- 1 garlic clove
- 2 limes

**“Trà Dào” Peach Iced Tea Slush**
- 2 ripe peaches
- 2 DECAF black tea bags
- 3 T honey/sugar/agave/maple syrup
- 2 C ice

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History of Spring Rolls

In China, spring rolls have a long, rich history. People believe that the pastry first appeared back in the Eastern Jin Dynasty, when people would make thin cakes with flour and eat them with vegetables on the first days of Spring. At the time, the cakes were called “spring dish.” Spring Dishes eventually evolved into Spring Cakes. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, there was a custom of “biting spring”, which means welcoming spring by eating spring cakes, and this practice was believed to ward off disaster and evil. As people’s cooking skills changed over the years, Spring Cakes evolved into Spring Rolls, which were smaller in size. Spring rolls were included in imperial court snacks. They are deep fried, crispy treats beloved in many Asian countries today, including Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Vietnamese Summer Rolls, by contrast, utilize fresh and raw vegetables and are not deep fried, but soft and flexible - perfectly refreshing on hotter summer days. A Summer Roll Bowl is all of the delicious ingredients of a fresh Vietnamese Summer Roll, but deconstructed and combined in a bowl as a salad! A little less work, but with all of the fun.

The surprise ingredient: Cucumbers!

★ Cucumbers originally come from India! They’ve been cultivated for over 4,000 years and originated in the wild in many varieties.

★ In the Americas, the best Native American cucumber cultivators were located in the lands of modern North and South Dakota.

★ “Cool as a cucumber” isn’t just a catchy phrase. The inner temperature of a cucumber can be up to 20 degrees cooler than the outside air. No wonder these are such a summertime favorite! Also, cucumbers can help cool the blood when eaten!

★ In general cultivation, cucumbers are classified into three main cultivar groups: "slicing", "pickling", and "burpless". BURPLESS?! That’s right. Burpless varieties are named so because they contain low or no cucurbitacin, a compound that causes bitterness and burps in people who eat them!

★ Cucumbers grown to eat fresh are called slicing cucumbers.

★ A cucumber’s flavor comes from its seeds. Medium sized cucumbers with soft small seeds have better flavor.

★ Cucumbers contain a large amount of antioxidants. Antioxidants are molecules that block oxidation, a chemical reaction that forms harmful molecules known as free radicals.

Time for a laugh!

Why was the cucumber mad? Because it was in a pickle!

Where do cucumbers go for a date? The Salad Bar!