

Roasted Vegetable Pasta Salad

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Memorial day has always been the unofficial start of Summer for me, and Am kicking it off with this roasted vegetable pasta salad.

This Italian pasta salad is full of good for you ingredients and everyone's favorite one Pasta. It's no secret I love pasta, I grew up with my mother making fresh pasta almost daily. We lived on a farm in the hills of Tuscany, my mother and father worked the land and we reaped the rewards in the most fresh, delicious food.

I can remember my Mama up before dawn dressed and standing at the counter rolling out the pasta dough on a wooden board my father make for her.

Yes, there's nothing better then fresh pasta, but if your looking for quick and easy then store bought is the way to go. With thousands of shapes and brands you can find any kind your looking for, from fresh to dry and everything in between. At the restaurants the raviolis, gnocchi and lasagna are made by hand the rest are store bought and delicious.

Make this roasted vegetable pasta salad your own

In this vegetable pesto pasta salad I used fusilli, the funny corkscrew shape pasta. But any shape pasta works in this recipe, even gluten free or whole wheat. What ever pasta you choose be sure not to over cook it .

Stop the cooking process by running cold water over the pasta.

This whole recipe is customizable from the pasta shape to what kind of vegetables you use.

I use whatever vegetables I have on hand in this recipe I put in a can drained chickpeas for crunch. The one thing I wouldn't change in this recipe is the dressing,

the pesto vinaigrette makes the dish burst with vibrant color and fresh Summer flavors. This pasta salad is perfect for the warmer weather as a side dish or add some grilled shrimp or chicken and you have a perfect dinner any night of the night.

If you make this please leave me a comment and don't forget to tag me on Instagram hearing from you is my favorite thing.

Ingredients

- 1/2 lbs. fusilli
- 1 zucchini sliced
- 1 red and 1 green bell pepper
- 2 ears of corn
- 1 can chickpeas drained
- 1 red onion
- 3 tablespoons chopped garlic
- 1 cup parmesan cheese
- 1 cup Italian dressing divided
- 1 cup prepared pesto sauce my walnut pesto sauce or your favorite store- bought pesto
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Cook pasta according to package direction run under cold water
2. Preheat oven to 375
3. Mix Pesto sauce with the Italian dressing
4. Mix all of the ingredients with 1/2 cup of the Italian

- pesto dressing
5. Roast vegetables 20 minutes
 6. Toss pasta and vegetables with the reserved Italian pesto dressing
 7. Sprinkle with Additional parmesan and 2 tablespoons chopped Italian parsley
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Salmon Broccoli Fettucini

Salmon Broccoli Fettucini

This salmon, broccoli fettucini is the best recipe when your craving Italian, and want quick and easy too. Pasta, salmon and broccoli tossed in a light creamy, lemony sauce, full of delicious summer flavors.

When you need an easy 30 minute dinner make this pasta. It's comfort food with a light and summery taste.

OK, so I know I post a lot of pasta recipes, but pasta is so versatile, you could have hundreds of combinations. At the restaurant on the menu, you pick, your pasta shape, sauce, and any extra add-ins.

By some estimates there are 600 distinct commercial brands of pasta shape, hundreds of sauces, endless vegetables and protein combinations.

That's why I post a lot of pasta recipes, when am stuck for a dinner idea it's Pasta to the rescue. It's not often you find a meal the whole family will like, when you do you'll want to make it often.

Making Salmon Broccoli Fettucini

Start by cooking the pasta according to package direction, adding the broccoli the last few minutes of cooking. Drain the pasta and broccoli reserving two cups of the magical pasta water.

YES, pasta water is magical when added to pasta sauces, it's natural starch thickens the sauce and adds flavor eliminating the need for added creams. Salt and pepper the salmon then cut it into cubes.

Brown the salmon then remove it from the pan to prevent overcooking, set it aside while making the sauce.

Put the rest of the ingredients in the pan scraping up all the brown bites, simmer for 10 minutes. Return salmon, broccoli and pasta to saute pan heat through, sprinkle with parsley and thyme...ENJOY If you make this recipe please leave me a comment and don't forget to tag me on Instagram hearing from you is my favorite part. If you like salmon, you may want to try my Citrus Salmon

Ingredients

- 1/2 Lbs. Fettuccine
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 1/2 Lbs. skinless salmon cut in medium chunks
- 2 Tbs. butter and extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cups pasta water
- 1 cup manufacturing cream
- 1 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 3 Tbs. chopped garlic
- 2 Tbs. grated lemon peel
- Juice from 2 lemons
- 2 Tbs. each Italian parsley and Thyme
- Pinch of nutmeg

- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Cook fettuccine according to package directions Add broccoli last 5 minutes and reserving two cups of the water
 2. Salt and pepper the salmon pieces
 3. In a saute pan bring oil and butter to a medium heat
 4. Add onion and garlic saute until tender and just beginning to brown
 5. Add salmon cook 5 minutes brown slightly and remove set aside
 6. Add reserved pasta water, cream, parmesan, lemon juice, and lemon peel
 7. Simmer 10 minutes
 8. Toss, pasta, broccoli, salmon and herbs in the sauce.....ENJOY
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Pesto Pasta Primavera

Pesto Pasta Primavera

This pesto, pasta, primavera is ever-changing, depending on what fresh vegetables you have on hand. The most important ingredient is fresh vegetables and good pesto sauce

You can use store bought or homemade pesto, I used homemade. There are a few staples in my kitchen I almost always have, one is marinara, the other is pesto.

The recipe for the pesto is easy in a blender mix 1 bunch of

washed basil stems removed, add 1 cup parmesan, 1 cup toasted pine nuts pour in 2 cups extra virgin olive oil.

Quick, easy, delicious and versatile is what make this healthy vegetarian meal perfect for weeknight family meals and it's decant enough for Saturday night dinner with friends.

If you want a hearty meal add chicken, shrimp or mix in any left overs. Change the shape of the pasta and the combination of add ins and you wouldn't repeat the same meal for atleast a week.

You'LL Love this Pesto Pasta Primavera

Sure there's a time for fancy plated, layered creations, that take hours to prepare, but for me, quick, easy, and delicious is what am looking for.

I want recipes that come together in less than an hour, most times less then 30 minutes. This pesto, pasta primavera comes together in less than 30 minutes , but your family and friends will think it took much longer.

When am stuck for dinner ideas or company's coming it's pasta I turn to. You are going to love this pasta, it's vibrant colors and fresh flavors make this one of those meals you'll want to make often.

If you make this please leave me a comment and don't forget to tag me on Instagram, hearing from you is my favorite part!!!

Ingredients

- 1/2 Lbs. Fettuccine
- 1 cup broccoli florets
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes cut in half
- 1 cup fresh corn

- 1 onion chopped
- 2 cups chopped spinach
- 2 cups prepared pesto sauce
- 2 cups reserved pasta water
- 3 Tablespoons chopped garlic
- 3 Tablespoons each chopped Italian parsley and basil
- 1/4 cup parmesan cheese

Instructions

1. cook pasta according to package directions reserving 2 cups of pasta water
 2. In a large saute pan in 2 tablespoons of olive oil and 2 tablespoons of butter saute the onion and garlic until tender and just starting to brown
 3. Add the vegetables salt and pepper now saute 5 minutes
 4. Add pesto and pasta water simmer 5 minutes longer
 5. Toss pasta in pesto sauce add herbs
 6. Sprinkle with the parmesan cheese Enjoy
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Vegetarian Risotto

Cauliflower

Vegetarian Risotto

Cauliflower

This flavorful vegetarian cauliflower risotto is a vibrant and easy meatless meal you can enjoy any day of the week. Made with one head of cauliflower, hearty chickpeas, baby spinach,

crunchy walnuts, and sweet dried apricots, it's a colorful, satisfying dish that's both nutritious and filling.

Looking for a healthy lunch or dinner idea? This cauliflower risotto is the perfect choice. And if you're not strictly vegetarian, feel free to top it with some grilled chicken for extra protein.

The inspiration? I was craving risotto—but didn't have any rice. What I *did* have was a beautiful head of cauliflower, and that's when the lightbulb moment happened. Cauliflower has evolved from a basic side dish to a star ingredient in everything from pizza crusts to hearty steaks—so why not risotto?

I wasn't sure exactly how it would turn out, but I trusted the flavors—and the result was absolutely delicious. Creamy, satisfying, and full of texture, this cauliflower risotto is a fresh way to rethink dinner.

Things to know about this vegetarian Cauliflower Risotto

You said:

Start by prepping your cauliflower. Pulse it *raw* in a food processor in batches until it reaches a rice-like texture. Be careful not to over-process—otherwise, you'll end up with mashed cauliflower. For added texture and bite, chop a handful of small florets by hand and mix them in with the riced cauliflower.

This step is key. To create a satisfying cauliflower risotto, you want the base to mimic real risotto—light, tender, and not

mushy.

Step 1:

Heat a large sauté pan over medium heat. Cook the onions and garlic in a bit of olive oil until soft and fragrant. Then, add the cauliflower rice in batches to avoid overcrowding the pan. Let it brown slightly to deepen the flavor.

Step 2:

Unlike traditional risotto, you won't need to stir in liquid gradually. Unless you prefer a looser, more "creamy" texture—then feel free to add up to 1 cup of vegetable broth.

Let me just say—I'm not a vegetarian, and I used to find cauliflower a bit bland. But this cauliflower risotto is genuinely *delicious*. It's a flavorful, satisfying way to turn simple vegetables into something special.

If you try this recipe, I'd love to hear what you think! Leave a comment below and tag me on Instagram so I can see your beautiful creations—it's truly the best part of sharing these recipes.

Ingredients

- 1 medium head of cauliflower, chopped
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 3 cups fresh spinach, chopped
- 1 (15 oz) can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 cup chopped dried apricots

- 1/4 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Place the cauliflower in a food processor and pulse in batches until it resembles coarse rice.
2. In a large sauté pan, heat the olive oil and butter over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic, and sauté until tender and just beginning to brown.

Stir in the riced cauliflower and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown—about 10 minutes.

Add the remaining ingredients and cook for another 5 minutes, until everything is well combined and heated through.

Finish with a sprinkle of extra Parmesan and fresh Italian parsley before serving.

Baked Chicken Rigatoni pasta

Baked Chicken Rigatoni pasta

This baked chicken rigatoni pasta dinner will let us know what Italians knew all along, that pasta is easy to prepare, versatile and good for you.

By having just a few basics, you can throw together a satisfying dinner ready to serve in less than an hour.

Virtually anything, yesterday's left over chicken, that's what I used, some fresh vegetables, a handful of cheese can be turned into a simple quick pasta dinner.

Pasta is an ideal main course it's high in complex carbohydrates and low in fat, making it a staple in our house two to three times a week.

It's not often you find a meal the whole family will like, when you do you'll want to make it often. And because pasta is so versatile you can serve it two to three a week, without repeating the same dish. What's not to love? Nothing!!!!

Things to know about this baked chicken rigatoni pasta recipe

This chicken baked rigatoni recipe uses pantry and refrigerator staples, that I had on hand. Pasta is so versatile, you can change this recipe up by leaving the mushrooms or the spinach out, or changing the pasta shape, without changing the flavor much.

Talk about different shape pasta, did you know there are more than 500 distinct commercial pasta shapes.

Pastas are now made in a variety of flavors and made with many different flours. The most important thing to remember when selecting, cooking and serving dried pasta is that they are interchangeable.

If you can't find a particular type called for in the recipe, simply use a pasta of similar size and shape.

If you make this recipe please leave me a comment, let me know your experience with the recipe, and don't forget to tag me on

Instagram, Hearing from you is my favorite part.

Ingredients

- 1/2 Lbs. rigatoni
- 2 skinless, boneless, chicken breasts, cut into thin strips
- 1/2 Lbs. sliced mushrooms
- 2 cups chopped spinach
- 1/4 cup flour
- 2 cups low fat milk
- 1 cup diced swiss cheese
- 1 cup parmesan cheese
- pinch of nutmeg
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Cook pasta el dente reserve 1 cup of pasta water
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
3. In a sauce pan in 2 tablespoons of butter and olive oil saute chicken until brown
4. Push chicken to side of pan, add Mushrooms and garlic saute until golden....salt and pepper now.
5. Mix the flour with 1 cup of the milk whisk until smooth
6. Slowly add the flour/milk mixture to simmering pan
7. Add remaining milk, cheeses, spinach, nutmeg and drained pasta and re severed pasta water
8. Transfer to a heat proof casserole dish, sprinkle with additional cheese and Italian Parsley
9. Bake covered for 20 minutes uncover and bake 10 minutes longer
10. Serve and ENJOY!!!!

Tuscan Bucatini

Tuscan Bucatini

This Tuscan bucatini is such a great recipe that uses few ingredients and comes together in less than 30 minutes, easy enough for weeknight family meals, and fancy enough for Saturday night dinners with friends.

It's fast and full of rich Italian flavors, sun dried tomatoes, spinach and garlic make this vegetarian pasta dinner mouth watering good.

Simple in nature, this recipe is made with ingredients you probably have on hand, but if you don't my recipes are always customizable, to fit your lifestyle and taste.

You can change this Tuscan pasta recipe by adding, subtracting or changing the pasta shape to make it your own creation.

Bucatini Pasta

It's no secret I love pasta!! When I am stuck for dinner ideas it's pasta to the rescue, and one of my favorite is bucatine.

Bucatini pasta is like a hollow thick spaghetti. Growing up my bother and I used the long hollow noodles like straws, it drove my mother crazy.

This dry pasta needs to simply be stirred in boiling water for 10 minutes, and dressed up with your favorite sauce. It taste

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delicious in this vegetarian Tuscan Bucatini recipe but you can use any shape pasta you like.

Be sure the stock pot is big enough for the long noodles to move freely. The right size pots and pans are important in any well equipped kitchen,

I use a 6 quart stock pot it's the perfect size for all around kitchen use. You don't need a lot of different pots and pans, start with a basic set and build as needed .

If you make this recipe please leave me a comment and don't forget to tag me on Instagram that's my favorite part!!!!

Ingredients

- 1 lbs bucatini pasta
- 4 cups chopped spinach
- 1 cup chopped sun dried tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons chopped garlic
- 1 small chopped onion
- 2 Tablespoons each butter and olive oil
- 2 cups reserved pasta water
- 1 cup parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons each Italian parsley, basil, and thyme

Instructions

1. Cook pasta according to package direction reserve two cups of pasta water
2. In a saute pan saute the garlic and onion until limp in 2 tablespoons of butter and 2 tablespoons of olive oil
3. Add the sun dried tomatoes and reserved pasta water
4. Simmer covered for 10 minutes
5. Add the spinach and parmesan cheese last 5 minutes
6. Toss the pasta in the sauce
7. Add herbs

8. Sprinkle with Additional parmesan and Italian parsley and ENJOY!!!

Pesto Broccoli Gnocchi

Pesto Broccoli Gnocchi

This Pesto, Broccoli , gnocchi, dinner , is as Irish as am going to get on this Saint Patrick's Day.

I am 100% Italian my husband is Irish, so I do cook corn beef and cabbage once a year, even though he could take it, or leave it.

Well this year, we are going to leave it, since I can't get to the store with the Corona virus, and if I could the shelves are bare. That's all am going to say about the times were living in.

This Pesto, broccoli, gnocchi recipe was inspired by me wanting to celebrate Saint Patrick's Day even if it wasn't traditional, with ingredients I had on hand

So here it is pesto, broccoli, gnocchi recipe that is easy and so quick it can be on your table in 30 minutes, made in one pan and your family and friends will love it.

It's so easy it makes a great week night meal with family. Make it in a stove to table skillet and you have an easy gnocchi dinner, just fancy enough for Saturday night dinner with friends.

What Are Gnocchi

Gnocchi is an Italian pasta, think small Italian dumplings. The most common is classic potato, the flavor I used in this Pesto broccoli gnocchi recipe,

Homemade are made of cooked mashed potatoes, flour and eggs. Some gnocchi recipes add ricotta to the dough. You can find these same flavors in store bought gnocchi.

Growing up, and in later years at the restaurants I watched my Mama make gnocchi, on a floured board using both hands, her skills never ceased to amaze me.

I was never as masterful as my Mama, but in the restaurants before the prep cooks and after my Mama passed, I make thousands of gnocchi, although I never learned how to use two hands.

Lucky for the home cook, in this pesto, broccoli, gnocchi recipe you don't have to make homemade gnocchi. You can use store bought shelf or refrigerated gnocchi.

There are some good brands out there, experiment with different brands and flavors to find what fits your lifestyle and taste. I like, wait NO, I love one pan cooking, homemade

gnocchi don't work as well for one pan cooking, you could up with mashed potatoes instead of little dumplings. In this pesto broccoli recipe I used classic refrigerated potato gnocchi.

Gnocchi cook quickly add them to the sauce the last 5 minutes of cooking, if at this point the sauce is too thick add a little chicken stock, if too liquid add 1 tablespoon of butter coated with butter.

When you make this recipe please leave me a comment and don't forget to tag me on Instagram, that's my favorite part!!!!

Ingredients

- 8 oz. store bought potato gnocchi
- 1 lbs. broccoli florets
- 1 cup chopped pancetta
- 1 cup prepared pesto sauce store bought or homemade
- 1 chopped onion
- 3 tablespoons chopped garlic
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons each chopped Italian parsley, basil and thyme
- 3 tablespoons butter
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. In a large saute pan with the butter render the pancetta until crisp
2. Don't drain the pancetta fat
3. Add the chopped onion and garlic saute until limp
4. Add the broccoli and chicken stock simmer covered 5 minutes
5. Add the gnocchi simmer 5 minutes longer
6. Add the parmesan cheese and herbs....ENJOY!!!

Steak Pappardella Pasta

Steak Pappardella Pasta

This lightened up steak and pappardella pasta recipe can be on your table in less than 30 minutes. That's right a restaurant quality meal without leaving home.

I lightened this recipe, by not using cream. Instead I added starchy pasta water, chicken stock and one pad of butter coated with flour to produce a rich, creamy sauce without the cream or the guilt.

Not only is this meal delicious, it's quick, easy, uses few ingredients, and your family and friends will love it.

When am stuck for dinner ideas it's pasta to the rescue.

What Is Pappardella

Papperadella are large, broad flat pasta noodles, originating from the region of Tuscany, where I was born. Is that why I have a fondness for this shape pasta?

The name papperedella also originates from the Tuscan dialect the verb "pappare" means eating with childish joy and pleasure. I can still see my mother standing at the counter, rolling out the pasta dough by hand, on a board my father made for her.

I was joyous standing knee high next to my Mama as she rolled the pasta dough paper thin, then cut it into large long noodles.

Yes it was childish joy and the pleasure was, I knew that dinner was near and it was going to be delicious.

This recipe is inspired from one of my Mama's recipe, except you don't have to make homemade pasta!!! No, you can use store bought papperedella.

In the restaurant this pasta is made by hand, by prep cooks using a commercial pasta machine. If you don't have prep cooks or a commercial pasta machine store bought papperdella works just fine.

I make homemade pasta when I have time using a pasta machine for the home kitchen. Making homemade pasta is not difficult, but it does require time, that we don't always have.

The other thing is you can customize this recipe to fit your lifestyle and taste, by changing up the pasta. Whole wheat or gluten free pasta works it this recipe, if you want to go that route.

Let me know how this recipe works for you. Please leave me a comment and don't forget to tag me on Instagram that's my favorite part!!!

Ingredients

- 8 oz. dried pappardella pasta
- 16 oz. sirlion steak cut into strips
- 2 tablespoons butter and 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 red and 1 green bell pepper cut into strips
- 2 cups chopped spinach
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped garlic
- 2 cups reserved pasta water
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons each chopped Italian parsley. thyme and basil
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Cook pasta according to package directions reserving 2

- cups of the pasta water
2. In a large skillet saute the onions and peppers until brown
 3. Add garlic saute until limp
 4. add the steak salt and pepper NOW
 5. Saute steak until brown being sure not to overcook the meat
 6. Add reserved pasta water and chicken broth
 7. coat one 1 tablespoon of butter with flour add it to the pan
 8. Simmer covered 10 minutes
 9. Add spinach and herbs last 5 minutes
 10. Toss Pappardella with steak sauce
 11. Add in parmesan cheese....ENJOY!!!!
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Cheesesteak Pasta Casserole

Transform Your Weeknight Blah Pasta into a Cheesesteak Pasta Casserole

Pasta is one of my favorite winter comfort foods, not to mention one of my top restaurant “luxury” meals. When I find it difficult to come up with a meal everyone at home will like, I turn to pasta. It’s delicious, plain and simple: think olive oil, garlic, Parmesan, and some herbs. When you add sirloin steak, and a medley of bell peppers, you have a guaranteed crowd pleaser! Steak can be expensive, but if you add it to pasta, it becomes an affordable meal that you can

easily include on your weekly menu. Transform your ordinary weeknight pasta into a restaurant-quality meal with this cheesesteak pasta casserole recipe that's quick, easy, inexpensive, and full of robust flavors.

How to save time and still make a filling meal

This cheesesteak pasta casserole can be on your table in less than an hour, but your family and friends will think it took much longer. How? This recipe calls for ingredients you probably already have on hand: butter, garlic, peppers, and marinara sauce, which together create a creamy, saucy, Italian dinner. It's a perfect way to show off what a great home chef you are.

You can roast the steak along with the peppers, instead of sautéing it. If I use this method –and I often do for a hands-free option– I use my toaster oven, instead of heating up my large oven to roast small amounts of meats.

I don't drink alcohol, so I give you options in all of my recipes to use wine or stock; use whatever fits your lifestyle and taste. In some recipes, I do use wine; I'm okay with that, but if you're not, use stock.

In this cheesesteak pasta casserole, I used my homemade marinara sauce.



Here's the recipe for my homemade marinara sauce:

In a 5 quart dutch oven sauté 1 chopped onion, 2 tablespoons chopped garlic, and 1 bunch of Italian parsley until limp.

Add 2 cans (15 oz. ea) crushed tomatoes, 2 cans tomato sauce and 15 oz. of water. Simmer covered for 1 hour, then add 1 bunch basil.

That's how easy making marinara sauce is: just a few ingredients and a little time. That's right! You don't need hours to make homemade marinara sauce.

About cooking pasta:

- When cooking pasta, salt the water *before* bringing it to a boil. The water should be boiling rapidly before dropping in the pasta.
- I used rigatoni, but you can use any shape or flavor

pasta you like. Reserve a few cups of pasta water to add to your sauce if it's too dry.

- It's also easier if the pasta water pan is on the back burner and the sauté pan on the front one. I like this 8 quart stock pot for pasta and soups.
- Use a large enough sauté pan so you don't crowd the ingredients.
- In the restaurant we precooked our pasta halfway and ran it under cold water to stop the cooking process; when we had an order, we put the pasta in a strainer, dropped in boiling water, and it tasted like it was just cooked. You can use the same process at home; if you cook too much, this method will help the pasta stay fresh for 1 to 2 days.

The whole idea behind food and creating recipes is to experiment and have fun doing it!

If you make this recipe, let me know your experience, comments, feedback... whatever you feel like talking about! That's my favorite part. Don't forget to tag me on Instagram!



Ingredients

Serves 4

- 1 lbs. rigatoni
- 1 lb. Sirloin steak, cut in strips
- 2 red and 2 green bell peppers, diced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. chopped garlic
- 4 c. homemade or store-bought marinara sauce
- 2 c. fresh mozzarella
- 1 c. grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 c. chicken stock or white wine
- 1 Tbsp. each chopped Italian parsley, basil, and thyme
- 2 Tbsp. each olive oil and butter

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375° F
2. Par boil the pasta
3. Cut the steak into strips
4. Heat oil and butter, and sauté the onion and garlic until opaque
5. Add peppers and sauté until golden, about 5 minutes
6. Add steak and season with salt and pepper **NOW**; sauté steak until golden brown
7. Deglaze the pan with chicken stock or white wine
8. Add prepared marinara sauce
9. Simmer until sauce thickens, about 10 minutes total
10. Add herbs in the last 5 minutes

11. Drain pasta and then toss in sauce
12. Transfer the pasta to an oven-proof covered casserole dish
13. Top cheesesteak rigatoni casserole with the fresh mozzarella and Parmesan cheese
14. Bake covered in a preheated 375° F oven for 20 minutes
15. Uncover and bake 10 minutes longer, or until top is golden brown and cheese is bubbly
16. Top with additional Italian parsley and Parmesan cheese, and salt and pepper to taste

ENJOY!

Creamy Mushroom Rigatoni

Looking for healthy vegetarian Italian? Try this Creamy Mushroom Rigatoni!

Here it is: this creamy mushroom rigatoni recipe starts off with a combination of cremini and shiitake mushrooms for a healthy, robust, Italian-inspired vegetarian meal your whole family will love!

When you need dinner quick on those busy weeknights or when you have last-minute guests coming: pasta to the rescue! Pasta is delicious, plain and simple: think olive oil, garlic, Parmesan, and some herbs; add different mushrooms, and you have a guaranteed crowd pleaser!

That's all it takes: adding mushrooms to this pasta recipe makes for a meal that is cause for celebration. Plus it's a perfect way to show off what a great "home chef" you are. This recipe was inspired by my love of pasta, one of my top restaurant "luxury" meals, but I've made it easy for the home cook.

Pasta prep can be fast and easy!

Rich and creamy, this vegetarian pasta is full of robust flavors. It can be on your table in less than 30 minutes, but your family and friends will think it took hours.

This recipe calls for ingredients you probably already have on hand: butter, garlic, cream, spinach, and mushrooms. Together, they create a creamy, saucy Italian-style dinner. I don't drink alcohol, so I give you options in all of my recipes to use wine or stock; use whatever fits your lifestyle and taste. In some recipes I do use wine; I'm okay with that, but if you're not, use stock.

When cooking pasta, salt the water before bringing the water to a boil. The water should be boiling rapidly before dropping in the pasta. I used rigatoni in this recipe, but you can use any shape or flavor pasta you like. You can even use gluten-free pasta, as well as any combination of mushrooms.

It's easier if the pasta water pan is on the back burner and the sauté pan on the front one. I like this 8-quart stock pot for pasta and soups.

Use a large enough sauté pan when sautéing the mushrooms to insure they brown rather than boil...yuck! Mushrooms are like a sponge when it comes to soaking up water, so clean them by wiping them clean rather than washing them in water.

In the restaurant, we precooked our pasta halfway and ran it under cold water to stop the cooking process. When we had an

order in, we put the pasta in a strainer, dropped it in boiling water, and it tasted like it was just cooked. You can use the same process at home; if you cook too much it stays fresh for one to two days.

The whole idea behind food and creating recipes is to experiment and have fun doing it. If you make this recipe, let me know your experience, comments, feedback; whatever you feel like talking about. That's my favorite part! Don't forget to tag me on Instagram.

Ingredients

serves 4

- 1 lbs. rigatoni
- 1 c. reserved pasta water
- 1/2 lbs. each cremini and shiitake mushrooms
- 4 c. chopped spinach
- 1 c. heavy whipping cream
- 2 tbsp. chopped garlic
- 1/2 c. chopped onion
- 1 tbsp. each chopped Italian parsley, basil, and thyme
- 1 c. vegetable stock or white wine
- 2 tbsp. each butter and olive oil
- 1 c. Parmesan cheese

Instructions

1. Cook pasta according to package directions
2. Heat the butter and olive oil and sauté the mushrooms until they're golden; season with salt and pepper
3. Add the onion and garlic, then sauté everything until opaque
4. De-glaze the pan with vegetable stock or white wine
5. Add heavy whipping cream and the reserved pasta water
6. Simmer until the sauce thickens, about 10 minutes

7. Add the spinach and herbs during the last five minutes
8. Drain the pasta and toss it in sauce
9. Finally, top with additional Italian parsley, then add salt and pepper to taste

Enjoy!