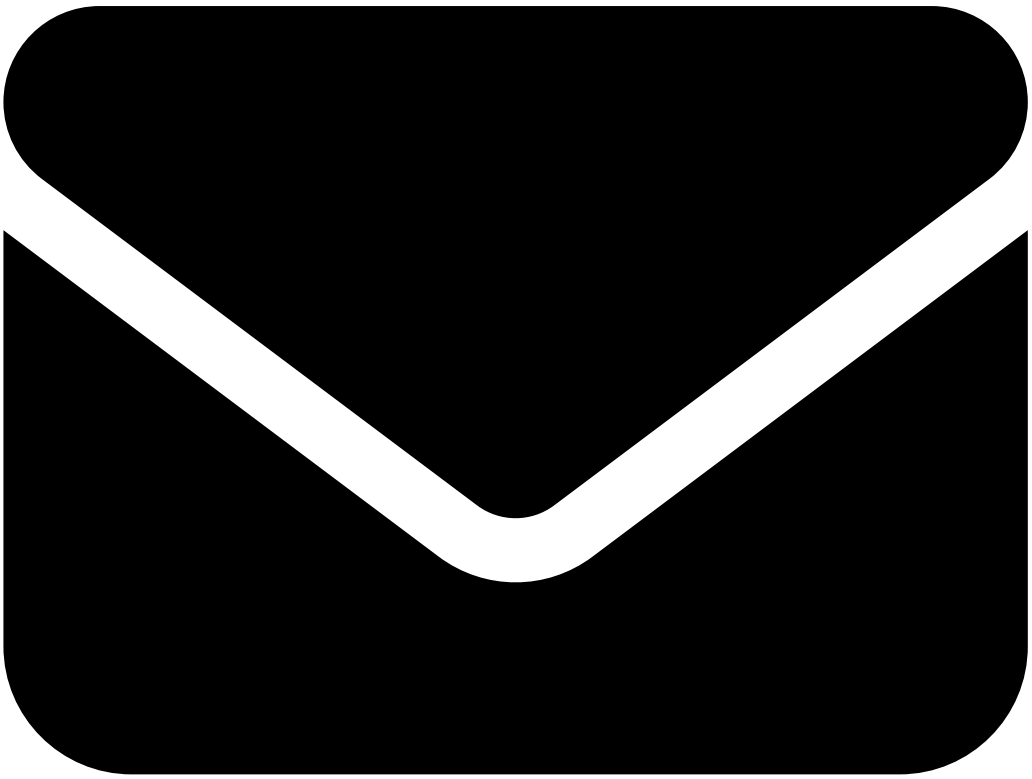
Cheesy Italian Penne Pasta with Peppers

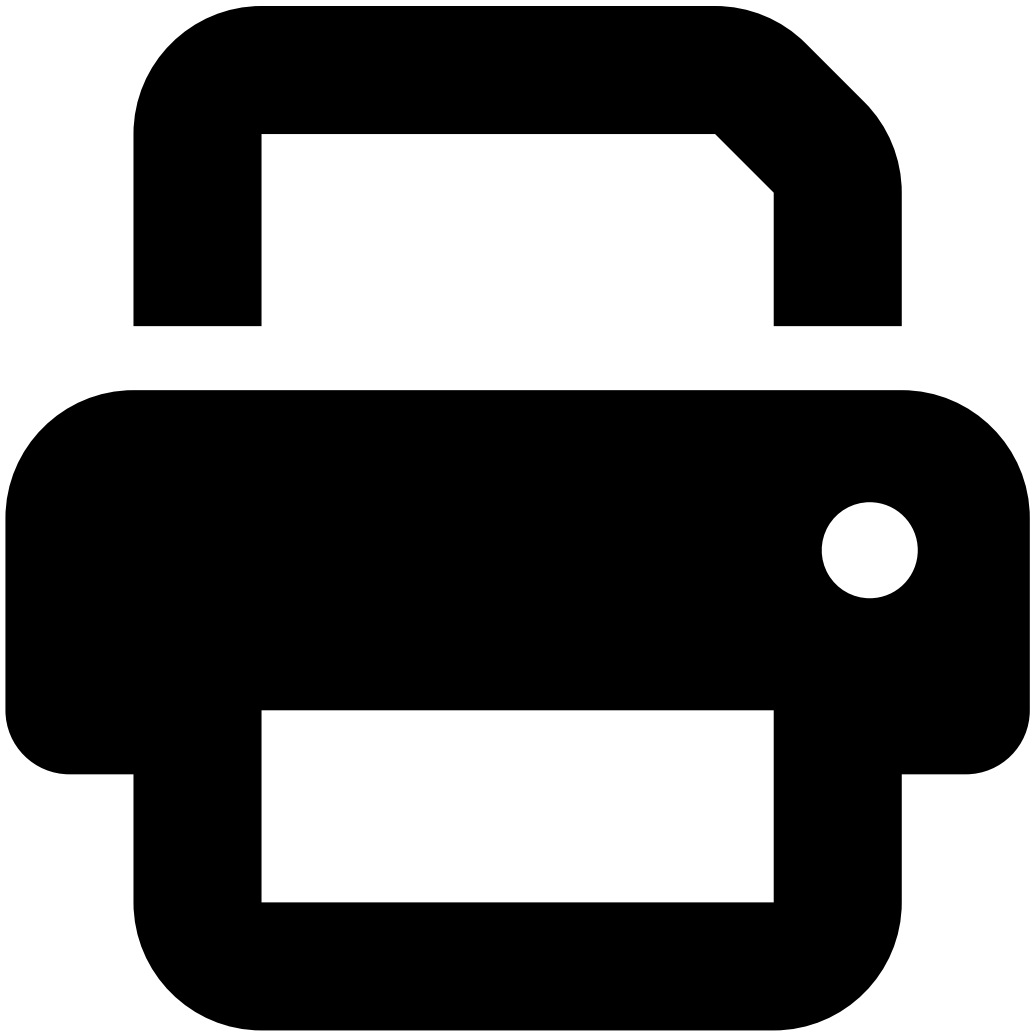
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SMS



Although I’m not vegetarian, I’ve noticed that quite a few of my pasta recipes happen to be meatless. This **Cheesy Italian Penne Pasta with Peppers** came about when I had a few ingredients on hand and wanted to use them up rather than let them go to waste.

If you’ve been following along, you know I don’t like wasting food. Some of my favorite meals come together by using what I already have in the refrigerator, and this easy vegetarian pasta recipe turned out to be a family favorite!

Tender bell peppers, fresh spinach, and penne pasta are tossed in a creamy, cheesy tomato sauce for a comforting Italian-inspired dinner. The combination of vegetables, melted cheese, and a light tomato sauce makes this pasta flavorful without being too heavy.

What I love most about this cheesy penne pasta is how easy it

is to prepare. You don’t need complicated ingredients or hours in the kitchen to get a delicious dinner on the table.

If you’re looking for an easy vegetarian pasta recipe that’s quick, satisfying, and packed with flavor, this Cheesy Italian Penne with Peppers checks all the boxes. It’s a wonderful meatless dinner for busy weeknights, and you might just find yourself making it whenever you have extra vegetables to use up!

Good to Know

- **Cook the pasta al dente:** The penne will continue to absorb sauce once everything is combined, so avoid overcooking it.
- **Save the pasta water:** Starchy pasta water helps loosen the sauce and allows it to cling to the penne. You may not need the full 2 cups, so add it gradually.
- **Cut the peppers evenly:** This helps them cook at the same rate and makes every bite delicious.
- **Adjust the cheese to your taste:** Use your favorite Italian cheeses, and add them gradually for a smooth, creamy sauce.
- **Make it your own:** This is a great recipe for using up vegetables. Mushrooms or zucchini would also work well with the peppers and spinach.

What to Serve with Cheesy Italian Penne

This cheesy vegetarian penne is satisfying on its own, but you can round out the meal with a simple side dish.

- **Homemade Italian Baguettes** – Perfect for soaking up any leftover tomato and cheese sauce.
- **Roasted Parmesan Broccoli** – An easy vegetable side to serve alongside pasta.

Storage and Reheating

Refrigerator: Allow the pasta to cool slightly and store it in an airtight container in the refrigerator within 2 hours of cooking. Enjoy within 3–4 days.

Reheating: Reheat leftovers in a skillet over medium-low heat with a splash of water or vegetable broth to loosen the sauce. You can also microwave individual portions, stirring halfway through. Add a little extra cheese if desired.

Freezing: You can freeze this pasta, although creamy cheese sauces may change texture after thawing. For the best quality, freeze in airtight, freezer-safe containers for up to 2 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator and reheat gently, adding a little liquid to help bring the sauce back together.

Make-ahead tip: You can chop the peppers and prepare the other vegetables ahead of time. When you're ready for dinner, cook the pasta and sauce fresh for the best texture.

More Easy Pasta Recipes to Try

If you love simple pasta dinners, here are a few more recipes to add to your meal rotation:

- **Creamy Tortellini Soup with Italian Sausage** – A cozy soup with cheese tortellini and a creamy broth.
- **Gnocchi in Tomato Burrata Sauce** – Tender gnocchi in a rich tomato sauce finished with creamy burrata.
- **Easy Authentic Spaghetti Carbonara** – A classic Italian pasta made with a few simple ingredients.

Let's Make This Cheesy Italian

Penne!

If you make this Cheesy Italian Penne with Peppers, please leave me a comment and let me know what you think. And don’t forget to tag me on Instagram when you make it! I love seeing your creations and hearing from you. Your comments and reviews also help other readers discover recipes they’ll love.

Cheesy Italian Penne pasta with Peppers



Cheesy Italian Penne with Peppers is an easy vegetarian pasta recipe made with tender penne, colorful bell peppers, spinach, and a creamy, cheesy tomato sauce. Ready in about 30 minutes, it's a delicious meatless dinner for busy weeknights.

- 1 lb Penne Pasta
- 1 red bell pepper cut into medium dice
- 1 green bell pepper cut into medium dice
- 2 cups chopped spinach
- 1 yellow onion
- 3 tbsp chopped garlic
- 2 tbsp each butter and olive oil
- 14.5 oz tomato sauce
- 1 cup reserved pasta water
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

- 1 cup grated parmesan
- 2 tbsp chopped Italian parsley
- 2 chopped basil
- Salt and pepper to taste

1. Cook pasta according to package directions reserving 2 cups of the water before draining
2. Meanwhile in a large saute pan bring the oil and butter to medium heat
3. Add the onion and garlic saute until tender and just beginning to brown
4. Turn the heat to medium high add the peppers and saute until crisp
5. Add the tomato sauce, cream and reserved pasta water
6. Lower the heat and simmer covered 15 minutes
7. Add the spinach, herbs, add the mozzarella and parmesan cheese simmer 5 minutes longer
8. Toss the Penne in the sauce adjust seasonings add more freshly grated parmesan before serving

Cook the penne al dente so it holds its shape when tossed with the sauce. Reserve the pasta water before draining, and add it gradually to create a smooth, creamy sauce that clings to the pasta. Cut the peppers into evenly sized pieces for consistent cooking, and stir in the cheese gradually until melted. Adjust the sauce’s consistency with a little more pasta water as needed before serving.

Main Course, pasta

Italian

Italian Penne pasta with Peppers