

Vegetarian Eggplant Penne Puttanesca

Vegetarian Eggplant Penne Puttanesca PUTTANESCA sauce might have a scandalous past, history has it was made by prostitutes, for it's powerful aroma, used to draw customers. I don't know how much is fact and how much is fiction, but I love the history behind the recipe. I know growing up we referred to it as the sauce of the prostitutes.

The combination of anchovies, olives and capers, gives this Puttanesca sauce a robust rich flavor, with aroma that still draws people to a different room,... The kitchen. The sauce cooks quickly in this deep covered saute pan, and it's a deep enough pan you can toss the pasta in the same pan.

I like simple recipes, that come together in less than an hour, but from the looks of the meal we can tell our friends it took hours. Make it special serve it on these pretty white dinner plates add some festive napkins and you have beautiful table and meal, that comes together in 30 minutes, is quick and easy for family weekday dinners. just fancy



enough for Saturday date night,

I used Penne rigatta , a short ridged pasta, you can use any type pasta that's fits your life style and taste, gluten free works with this recipe

If the sauce is too dry use a cup of the pasta water, it's

starchy from the pasta, and great to add substance to the sauce, and because of it's starchy it's a thicken agent. I also used kalamata olives, I love their pungent taste. Traditionally the olives used were picked by my mother on our family farm in Tuscany, she would cure them in a salt and water solution she changed every few days, for weeks, until the bitterness was drawn out. They went from a shiny purple to a shriveled up olive, she then marinated in olive oil, garlic, orange rind, and red pepper flakes, they were delicious and time consuming. It is important in this recipe to use flavorful olives. It's a simple sauce with bold flavors, created by strong flavored ingredients.

I hope you try this and the part I like best....Let me know how you liked it!!!! Enjoy restaurant style cooking at home. If you love eggplant pasta recipes here is another one to try Sicilian eggplant caponata rigatoni or my personal favorite zucchini pasta all Norma

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. penne pasta, cooked according to package directions (reserve 2 cups of pasta water before draining)
- 1 medium eggplant, peeled and cut into large cubes
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp minced garlic
- 4 anchovy fillets
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup capers

- 1 cup pitted and chopped Kalamata olives
- 1 (15 oz) can chopped tomatoes
- 1 (15 oz) can tomato sauce
- 1 Tbsp each: chopped Italian parsley, basil, thyme, and red pepper flakes
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp butter

Instructions

1. Cook the penne according to package instructions. Before draining, reserve 2 cups of the starchy pasta water. Set aside.
2. In a large deep sauté pan, heat the olive oil and butter over medium heat. Add the cubed eggplant and cook until golden brown and softened. Remove the eggplant and set aside.
3. In the same pan, add the chopped onion and garlic. Sauté gently until the onions are translucent and fragrant. Stir in the anchovy fillets and cook until they melt into the onions, about 2 minutes.
4. **Simmer the Tomatoes**
Add both the chopped tomatoes and tomato sauce (do not drain). Stir to combine, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Return the eggplant to the pan. Add 1 cup of the reserved pasta water. Stir in the olives, capers, red pepper flakes, parsley, basil, and thyme. Simmer

uncovered for an additional 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

6. Add the drained pasta to the sauce, tossing gently to coat. Use reserved pasta water as needed to loosen the sauce and help it cling to the pasta.
7. Sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese and serve hot.
Enjoy!