

Easy 30-Minute Pasta Primavera with Light Cream-Lemon Sauce

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Yield: 4 servings

Active Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

12 oz pasta (rigatoni, penne, or farfalle)
2 tablespoons olive oil
4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1 bunch asparagus (about 12 oz), cut into 1-inch pieces
1 medium zucchini, halved and sliced into half-moons
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1 cup peas, fresh or frozen
2 large handfuls baby spinach
3 tablespoons heavy cream (optional)
1 cup reserved pasta water, divided
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
3/4 cup freshly grated parmesan, plus more to serve
Salt and black pepper

NOTES

No cream? Use an extra ladle of pasta water and 1 extra tablespoon of parmesan. Add a teaspoon of olive oil at the finish.

Asparagus season ends soon. Zucchini and cherry tomatoes are a good swap as the season shifts.

Short pasta shapes work best. Rigatoni ridges catch the sauce; penne and farfalle work equally well.

Store leftovers in a sealed container for up to 3 days. Reheat on the stovetop with a splash of water.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Salt it heavily. Cook pasta 1 minute less than package directions. Before draining, scoop out 1 1/2 cups pasta water and set aside. Drain pasta.
2. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add asparagus and zucchini in a single layer. Season with salt. Cook without stirring for 2 minutes, toss, and cook another 1 to 2 minutes until edges brown and vegetables turn just tender. Move to one side of the pan.
3. Reduce heat to medium. Push vegetables to the edge and add garlic to the center. Cook 60 seconds, stirring constantly, until fragrant and pale gold. Don't let it darken.
4. Add cherry tomatoes. Stir everything together and cook 2 minutes until tomatoes begin to soften and release juice.
5. Pour in 3/4 cup pasta water and the cream. Stir to combine. Add peas. Simmer 1 minute. Add spinach and stir until it wilts, about 30 seconds.
6. Remove pan from heat. Add drained pasta, lemon zest, lemon juice, and parmesan. Toss 1 to 2 minutes until sauce coats every piece. Add pasta water a splash at a time if the sauce looks tight.
7. Serve immediately with extra parmesan and black pepper.