



Fusilli With Roasted Vegetables & Romesco

Roasting the vegetables intensifies their sweetness to perfection.

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Pasta salads can be dull, but this one is quite tasty. Roasting the vegetables intensifies their sweetness to perfection, and the delicious romesco sauce made with roasted pepper and almonds brings the whole dish together. Despite the number of ingredients, the prep and cooking are easy, so this is really worth putting together.

Servings: 6 / Ingredients: 14 / Prep: 30 minutes

Ingredients

- 3 cups diced eggplant (about 1 medium eggplant)
- 3 medium red peppers, deseeded
- ½ cup halved cherry tomatoes
- 1 medium shallot, sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, kept in their peel
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 6 ounces whole-wheat fusilli
- 6 cups baby spinach leaves
- 3 tablespoons almonds
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup olive oil

- 6 small fresh mozzarella balls halved, or half of 1 large ball cut into a ½-inch dice

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F.
2. In a large bowl, toss the eggplant, red peppers, cherry tomatoes, shallot and garlic with 1 tablespoon of olive oil, salt and pepper. Spread onto a baking sheet in a single layer. Roast for 20 minutes or until tender and well browned. When the vegetables are done, allow them to cool slightly. Set aside half of the peppers for the dressing.
3. Meanwhile, bring a large stockpot full of water to a boil. Add the fusilli. Cook for 3 minutes less than stated on the package instructions, add in the spinach and cook for 1 more minute. Drain well, drizzle with olive oil and let cool at room temperature, turning every so often.
4. To make the romesco dressing, take the cooled roasted red peppers you set aside and puree them with the almonds, red wine vinegar, Parmesan cheese and olive oil. Taste for seasonings.
5. Toss the cooled pasta, spinach and roasted vegetables with the dressing. Stir in the fresh mozzarella. Eat at room temperature or cover and keep in the refrigerator until ready to eat.

Chef Tips

If you are on a low-fiber diet, you can lessen the amount of fiber in this salad by using 8 ounces of white pasta instead of 6 ounces of whole wheat and 2 cups of eggplant instead of 3.

Nutrition Facts (per serving)

Calories: 463; fat: 28 g; saturated fat: 10 g; polyunsaturated fat: 3 g; monounsaturated fat: 14 g; carbohydrates: 33 g; sugar: 7 g; fiber: 5 g; protein: 21 g; sodium: 576 mg

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