



RECIPE: RATATOUILLE PASTA

PAIR WITH: EN GEDI

INGREDIENTS:

1 large or 2 medium Italian eggplants	1½ oz Parmesan, finely grated
Kosher salt	½ cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more for drizzling
1 large or 2 small red bell peppers	¼ cup capers
1 large zucchini	Fresh cracked black pepper
2 medium yellow onions	1lb dry cavatappi pasta
1 pint cherry tomatoes	1½ cups basil leaves, torn if large, plus more for garnish
4 garlic cloves	
1 lemon	

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Cut 1 large or 2 medium Italian eggplants into ½" pieces. Transfer to a colander set over a medium bowl and sprinkle with 2 tsp. salt. Let sit for 30 minutes. Your eggplant might start to discolor and should start to release some moisture that will fall into the bowl below.
2. While the eggplant is sweating, cut 1 large or 2 small red bell peppers and 1 large zucchini into ½" pieces. Transfer to a medium bowl. Peel 2 medium onions, and cut them into thin slivers. Transfer to a bowl with bell peppers. Halve 1 pint cherry tomatoes and transfer to a small bowl. Mince 4 garlic cloves, then add to a bowl with tomatoes. Slice 1 lemon in half and set aside.
3. When the eggplant has been sitting for 25-30 minutes, GENTLY squeeze it to get rid of more of the moisture. Heat 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil in a large Dutch oven or heavy pot over high until shimmering. Once hot, add half of the eggplant and stir to coat in oil.
4. Cook, stirring every 3 minutes or so, until eggplant is golden, with some pieces starting to brown and char, 5–7 minutes. Reduce heat to medium if eggplant is browning too quickly. Using a slotted spoon or fish spatula, transfer to a plate. If any eggplant pieces stick, just scrape them up. Heat 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin oil over high. Cook the remaining eggplant using the same process (5–7 minutes). Transfer to a plate with cooked eggplant.
5. Scrape off any bits of eggplant from the pot, if needed. Heat ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil over medium-high. Add ¼ cup capers. Cook, stirring, until bubbling subsides, 30–60 seconds.
6. Add onion-pepper mixture, season with 1½ tsp. salt, and cook, stirring frequently, scraping bottom of pan, and reducing heat if vegetables are getting too brown, until vegetables are softened, slumped, and have started to take on lots of color, 12–15 minutes. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of generously salted water to a boil (this is for your pasta).
7. Add tomato-garlic mixture to sauce, reduce heat to medium-low, and cook, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon, until almost all tomatoes have burst and vegetables are starting to break down and deeply caramelize, about 10 minutes.
8. Finish the sauce: Return eggplant to pot and cook until vegetables are tender but the vegetable pieces are still distinct (you don't want total mush), about 5 more minutes. Taste and season with salt.
9. Add pasta to boiling water right after you add the eggplant, cook to package instructions. Before draining, scoop out 1 cup pasta starch water and set aside.
10. Reduce heat over sauce to low. Add drained pasta and stir to coat in sauce. Add 1 cup Parmesan, pour ½ cup pasta cooking liquid over, then stir vigorously with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon until a creamy sauce forms with no clumps of cheese. Add more pasta cooking liquid as necessary if pasta starts to stiffen. Remove from heat. Squeeze juice from ½ lemon over, then stir in 1½ cups basil. Taste for salt and lemon juice.
11. Divide pasta among bowls. Top with cheese, and basil. Drizzle with oil.