

Orecchiette with Broccoli and Sausage Italian American Style

Serves 6

By Leonard Muscolino

Ingredients

- 6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 pound sweet or hot Italian sausage, about 4 links
- 5 cloves garlic, large dice
- 3 anchovy fillets
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 3 bunches broccoli crowns cut into bite sized pieces, and steamed until fork tender
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ cup water
- 1 pound orecchiette pasta
- 1 cup grated Parmigiano Reggiano

Directions

1. Place a large skillet over a medium-high flame and heat 2 Tablespoons of the oil.
2. Cut sausage links into ¼ inch thick slices. Add the sausage to the pan and cook until browned on all sides and fully cooked. Remove to a plate. Set it aside.
3. Add the remaining oil to the pan and heat over a medium flame. Add the garlic, anchovies and red pepper flakes to the pan and cook until the garlic has become golden, and the anchovies have melted, about 30-60 seconds.
4. Add the broccoli and salt to the pan. Add the sausage back to the pan along with any juices that have collected on the plate. Toss until mixed.
5. Add in the water and cover. Cook until the broccoli is tender, about 5 minutes.
6. Drop the pasta into a large pot of generously salted boiling water. Cook until al dente, which is usually with the package directions, minus one minute. If the package reads cook for 11 minutes cook the pasta for 10 minutes to assure the pasta is al dente.
7. Before draining the pasta, scoop out a cup of pasta water and reserve in case the pasta is tight.
8. Drain the pasta and add it to the pan with the broccoli and sausage. Toss for 1-2 minutes over a medium-high flame. Add enough reserved pasta water to desired consistency.
9. Remove from heat and stir in the Parmigiano Reggiano cheese allowing the residual heat of the pan to melt the cheese. Serve immediately.

Vegetarian Option – Omit sausage and anchovies.

Gluten Free Option – Use GF pasta instead of the Orecchiette pasta.