

Pasta with Eggplant, Caramelized Onions and Pine Nuts

from Sara Foster's: Foster's Market Cookbook

This takes about an hour to prepare so it is a good choice for a weeknight dinner. Hearty, earthy and delicious. If pine nuts are not in your budget, walnuts will work just fine. If you are like me and don't particularly care for red bell peppers use some sundried tomatoes or if tomatoes are in season, roast up a pan full of small romas and toss them into the pasta. If you are an olive fan, add some sliced black olives or even capers. You can get a lot of what you need for this recipe at the East Rivendell Market! Nothing like farm fresh produce to make a healthy and delicious dinner.

1 lb pasta
1/2 c. olive oil
2 sweet onions cut in half lengthwise and thinly sliced
1/4 C balsamic vinegar
2 eggplants peeled, diced, and cut into 1/2 inch cubes
4 garlic cloves, minced
3 roasted red bell peppers, peeled, cored, seeded, and julienned OR
roasted tomatoes
1/2 c. fresh parsley
8-10 fresh basil leaves, cut into very fine strips
1/2 c. Italian vinaigrette (Wisk together 1/4 c. red wine vinegar, 3 cloves minced garlic, 1 tsp Dijon mustard, 2 tsp dried oregano, 3/4 c. extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper to taste)
1/2 c. pine nuts, toasted
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1 c. crumbled goat cheese or feta cheese

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Cook the pasta in a large pot of boiling, salted water, stirring occasionally about 8-10 minutes or until al

dente. Drain and toss with 1 Tbsp olive oil and set aside.

Heat 3 Tbsp olive oil in a medium skillet over med-low heat. Add the onions and cook and stir about 10 minutes, until the onions are soft and translucent. Add 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar, reduce heat to low, and cook and stir 20-25 minutes longer, until the onions are soft, brown, and caramelized. Set aside.

Meanwhile, toss the remaining olive oil and remaining balsamic vinegar with the eggplant and garlic and mix to coat evenly. Spread in a single layer in a baking pan and place in the oven to roast for 25-30 minutes. Stir several times during the cooking process, until the eggplant is lightly brown and tender. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool.

Combine the pasta, onions, eggplant-garlic mixture, roasted red peppers, pine nuts, parsley, basil, and vinaigrette and toss lightly to mix. Season with salt and pepper and add the goat cheese. Toss gently to mix again. Serve immediately or refrigerate until ready to serve.