

Pasta alla Norma

*A great way to enjoy your fresh Eggplant & Basil is **Pasta alla Norma**.*
This classic Italian dish is said to have been created in the 1800's after the opening night of Bellini's opera "Norma".

Ingredients:

2 medium Eggplants, cut into 1/2 inch cubes
2 tbsp. Kosher Salt + more for pasta
Fresh ground Black Pepper
5 tbsp. Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1 cup chopped Onion
4 cloves minced Garlic
8 small Peperoncini, minced
2 - 4 1/2 oz. cans Diced Tomatoes, in juice
1 pound Spaghetti or Penne, 1 cup fresh torn Basil
1 cup Ricotta Salata

Directions:

Place eggplant cubes in colander with 2 tbsp. kosher salt. Let eggplant drain 15 minutes. Pat dry, removing excess salt.

Heat 2 tbsp. oil in a heavy skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and sauté until onion is soft, about 5 minutes. Add peperoncini and tomatoes with juice. Cook about 15 minutes and remove from heat.

Heat 1 tbsp of oil in another large skillet over **high** heat...work in batches, adding a tbsp. of oil for each batch. Cook eggplant until brown on all sides, about 8 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon, slightly drain on paper towels, and transfer to tomato sauce in skillet.

Meanwhile, cook pasta in a large pot of boiling, salted water until al dente. Drain, reserving 1 cup of pasta water. Add water to sauce, bring to a boil, add pasta and basil, and toss to coat. Season to taste with salt & pepper, transfer to pasta bowl, top with ricotta salata and serve.

Serves 6