

Pasta with Braised Bacon and Roasted Tomato Sauce

Servings : 4

Amount	Measure	Ingredient - Preparation Method
		braised bacon
1	pound	slab bacon in one piece, skin removed
1	small	carrot - peeled and coarsely chopped
1	stalk	celery - coarsely chopped
1	small	yellow onion - thickly sliced
1		bay leaf - crumbled
1/2	cup	dry white wine
1/2	cup	dry white vermouth
1/2	cup	chicken stock
		roasted tomato sauce
2 1/2	cups	drained canned whole tomatoes - juice reserved
1/2	cup	extra virgin olive oil
1	medium	yellow onion - sliced
6	cloves	garlic - coarsely chopped
1	teaspoon	freshly cracked black pepper
1		bay leaf
		salt
		sugar
1	pound	pasta (sphagetti or penne)
		pecorino romano - freshly grated

Bacon:

Preheat oven to 300.

Place bacon in a wide pot and add cold water to cover by a few inches. Set over medium heat, bring to a simmer and cook until the bacon softens a little, 5 to 10 minutes. Drain and rinse.

Place the bacon fat side up in a shallow flameproof baking dish just large enough to hold it and the vegetables in a single layer. A 1-qt gratin dish should work, cut bacon into 2 pieces if needed. Add the carrot, celery, onion and bay leaf and moisten with equal parts of the wine, vermouth and stock, adding enough to come to a depth of 1/2". Place over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Cover with parchment paper, and then foil, dull side out, transfer to the oven, and bake until melting tender, about 2.5 hours.

Uncover the baking dish, raise the heat to broil, and leave just long enough to color the surface, 3-5 minutes. Leave to cool in dish, then skim or scrape off and discard the rendered fat.

Sauce

Halve the tomatoes and place cut side down in a shallow roasting pan or gratin dish in a single crowded layer. Add the juice they released when cut, plus enough reserved juice to a depth of 1/4". Drizzle with a tablespoon or two of the olive oil.

Roast until the tomatoes char slightly and are bubbling around the edges, about 15 minutes. Use a dough cutter to cut coarsely in the roasting dish.

Shortly before the tomatoes are done, in a 12 inch skillet, cook the onions in about 3 tbs of olive oil over med-high heat until they begin to color at the edges, about 3 minutes. Reduce the heat and stir in the garlic, pepper, and bay leaf.

When the onions are beginning to soften through, stir in warm tomatoes and another table-spoon or two of olive oil. Salt lightly and add a pinch or two of sugar if tomatoes are tart. Add a spoonful of reserved juice if needed to keep tomatoes saucy. Simmer briefly and set aside.

Pasta

Cut the braised bacon into strips about 1/4 inch thick and 1 inch long.

Drop the pasta into 6 quarts of rapidly boiling water seasoned with a scant 2 tablespoons salt. Stir, and cook until al dente.

Brown the bacon strips in a skillet or saute pan over medium heat, stirring as needed until both sides are slightly colored, a few minutes at most. If the bacon seems dry, add a trickle of olive oil. Stir in tomato sauce and simmer for a minute or so.

Drain the pasta and fold into sauce. Serve with pepper and cheese.