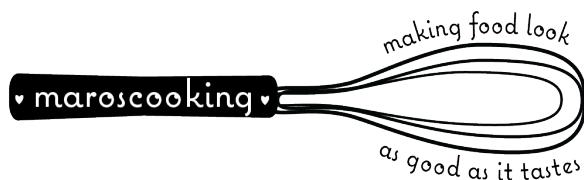


Penne with Blistered Tomatoes, Spinach and Crispy Chickpeas

Ingredients to serve 4-6:

- ➲ 1 lb penne pasta
- ➲ 6 cups cherry tomatoes
- ➲ 15 oz can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- ➲ 2 shallots minced
- ➲ 4 cloves garlic minced
- ➲ 5 oz baby spinach leaves
- ➲ 1 large bunch basil, julienned, plus leaves for garnish
- ➲ 8 oz small mozzarella balls
- ➲ ½ cup grated parmesan, plus more for serving
- ➲ ¼-½ cup peanut oil
- ➲ 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ➲ kosher salt and pepper
- ➲ 2 teaspoons smoked paprika
- ➲ 2 teaspoons crushed red pepper, optional



Directions:

In a large skillet (I love to use my enamel Le Creuset), heat olive oil and add shallots and garlic. Sauté on medium low until fragrant (about 3 minutes), stirring constantly. Add tomatoes to skillet and turn up heat. Season with salt and pepper and gently toss tomatoes in pan for an additional 5 minutes or so until they begin to blister and split open. Keep warm and set aside.

In a separate 12" skillet, heat peanut oil until almost smoking. Gently pat chickpeas dry with paper towel to remove any excess water. Once oil is hot, carefully place chickpeas in oil and fry for about 4 minutes until golden and beginning to get crispy. tossing gently if necessary. With a slotted spoon, transfer to a paper towel-lined plate and sprinkle with salt and pepper and smoked paprika.

Cook pasta according to package directions to al dente, reserving about a cup of pasta liquid. Drain pasta and place back in pot with a tablespoon of olive oil on low, and add spinach leaves to wilt, then toss in warm tomato mixture along with all accumulated juices and saved pasta water if pasta seems dry.

Transfer to serving bowl, toss in mozzarella, chopped basil and parmesan. Place prepared chickpeas on top of pasta and garnish with basil leaves and crushed red pepper if using.

Serve warm with a additional parmesan if desired and enjoy!