



Pasta Alla Norma

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

- 2 medium eggplant
- ½ c kosher salt (used for the water and the eggplant)
- 6T extra virgin olive oil
- 1c onion, diced
- 4clv garlic, minced
- 2ea peperoncini (can sub crushed ½ t red chiles)
- 10-12 fresh RIPE roma tomatoes (peeled and seeded...can sub crushed tomato..canned 14oz if it is a good quality...San Marzano or Muir Glen)
- 1bu fresh basil, torn into small pieces (about 1c)
- ½ c ricotta salata, crumbled
- 1lb dried spaghetti

Method:

Put a large pot with 6 quarts of water over a high heat, bring to a boil and season to taste with salt. (about 2-3T) Dice eggplant into a medium dice, place in a colander and sprinkle with kosher salt. (about 2T) Let sit about 15 minutes. Pat dry...Meanwhile start sauce. Heat a skillet over a medium flame. Add 2T olive oil. Add chopped onions and garlic, cook until onions soften and garlic is fragrant, (about 5-6 minutes) add peperoncini. Add tomatoes and cook until tomatoes begin to breakdown (about 15 minutes). Turn off. Heat 4T olive oil in a skillet over high heat, add eggplant a little at a time not to crowd the pan. Sear until browned on all sides, do not move pan until it begins to brown. Use a slotted spatula to remove eggplant and repeat in batches until all of your eggplant is fried and browned. Add cooked eggplant to tomato sauce. Once water boils add spaghetti and cook until al dente. (Usually following the directions on the package is a good rule of thumb, there are a lot of different thicknesses of spaghetti available). Drain but before you drain add a ladle of the pasta cooking liquid to your sauce (about 2 oz) Bring this to a boil, add spaghetti, add basil and toss. Taste and adjust seasonings, Place in a bowl and top with ricotta salata!
Buon Appetito!

Although not classic these are a few variations:

- I like to sometimes add salted capers ...about 2t, rinsed and rough chop
- Nice to add a fleshy black olive like Gaeta (pitted and halved)
- Fresh Oregano and or Mint are nice touches
- Can go up or down on the amount of chiles...if you like spicy or not