

Pasta with Spicy Sun-Dried Tomato Cream Sauce

Bon Appetit

This pasta is great as is, or it is also excellent and a little more filling with chicken or shrimp. For a lower-fat option, use ½ cup whipping cream and ½ cup chicken broth.

1 tablespoon olive oil
 4 large garlic cloves, finely chopped
 1 cup chopped drained oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes
 1 cup whipping cream
 1 7.25-ounce jar roasted red peppers, drained and chopped
 ½ teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
 1 cup chopped fresh basil
 1-pound penne pasta
 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Heat oil in heavy medium saucepan over medium heat. Add garlic; sauté 1 minute. Add tomatoes, cream, red peppers and crushed red pepper; simmer over medium heat 2 minutes. Stir in ½ cup basil and simmer 1 minute longer.

Cook pasta in large pot of boiling water until tender. Drain, reserving ¾ cup pasta cooking liquid. Return pasta to pot. Add sauce, cheese and ½ cup basil and toss to coat. Add enough reserved cooking liquid to pasta to moisten if dry. Season with salt and pepper.

Serves 4

Fish Tacos with Cabbage Slaw

These tacos are wonderfully tasty and simple. The cabbage slaw is really your only prep, the fish takes only a few minutes to season and cook. Serve with black beans on the side or as my kids like it, with the beans in the taco.

4 cups very thinly pre-sliced green cabbage
 1 cup chopped plum tomato
 1/3 cup thinly sliced green onions
 ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
 5 tablespoons olive oil, divided
 ½ teaspoon salt, divided
 1 pound tilapia fillets
 1 teaspoon chili powder
 8 (6-inch) corn tortillas

Combine first 4 ingredients in a large bowl. Add juice, 1 tablespoon oil, and ¼ teaspoon salt; toss well to combine. Set aside.

Heat remaining 2 teaspoons oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Sprinkle fish evenly with remaining ¼ teaspoon salt and chili powder. Add fish to pan; cook 3 minutes on each side or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Remove from heat; cut fish into bite-sized pieces.

Warm tortillas and spoon about ¼ cup cabbage mixture and fish down the center; fold tortilla in half. Serve tacos with remaining cabbage slaw and black beans.



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Let's Eat!

Easy, Appetizing, Timely Meals

Monday

Pasta with Spicy Sun-Dried Tomato Cream Sauce

Tuesday

Fish Tacos with Cabbage Slaw

Wednesday

White and Green Chili

Thursday

Tuscan Chicken Stew

Friday

17 Bean Soup

Here's a beer batter recipe for a fun weeknight fish fry:

Mix 1 cup flour, 1 cup beer, and salt to taste. Fold in 2 egg whites, whipped to soft peaks. Heat about 1/2 inch oil in pan. Dredge four 9-oz. fillets of fish (I use tilapia) in batter and carefully drop into oil; fry until golden on both sides. Drain on paper towel and serve with tartar sauce or malted vinegar.

There is one thing more exasperating than a wife who can cook and won't, and that's a wife who can't cook and will.

~Robert Frost

As a parting message I thought I would share some of my favorite resources to find recipes and meal ideas. For starters I recommend planning 2-3 meals per week, as you get the hang of it you can add more. Some of my favorite books and magazines include *Cooking Light*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, and *Everyday Food*. I also love to pick up the “special issue,” of any of my favorite magazines or titles that catch my eye, such as “quick and easy weeknight meals.” I also like to use the Internet and simply google a specific recipe name. If I am looking to use a particular ingredient I will often use foodtv.com. Finally, check the sides of packaging for some great ideas for meals or snacks. Remember to keep it simple and have a wonderful summer!

Happy Eating!

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17 Bean Soup

Trader Joe's recipe box

This recipe is from the recipe box at Trader Joe's. Kate Bischoff, a second grader at SLO Classical Academy, "just had to have it!" after tasting it at the tasting table. This is an easy soup to assemble in the crock-pot. If your family enjoys soup this will be a great addition. Tastes good with sausage, ham or no meat at all!

- 1 package 17 Bean and Barley Soup (TJs)
- 1-15½ oz. jar of Cacciatore Sauce (TJs)
- 1 package Gerhard's Smoked Chicken and Turkey Sausage with Garlic and Herbs (or ham)
- 1 heaped teaspoon Pasta Seasoning (TJs)
- 6-8 cups chicken broth (I usually use a ratio of water and broth)
- salt and pepper to taste

Combine beans, Cacciatore Sauce, seasoning and chicken broth in a crock-pot. Set on high for 8 hours. Chop sausage (or ham) into bite size pieces and add during the last hour of cooking. Salt and pepper to taste and enjoy!

Tuscan Chicken Stew

Cooking Light

This meal always surprises me how quickly it comes together. It is simple, yet tasty! Enjoy with a biscuit or bread.

- ½ teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 pound skinless, boneless chicken breast, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons minced bottles garlic (or 2 garlic cloves, minced)
- ½ cup chicken broth
- 1 16 ounce can cannellini beans or other white beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 7 ounce bottle roasted red bell peppers, drained and cut into ½-inch pieces
- 3 ½ cups torn spinach

Combine first 4 ingredients, and toss well. Heat olive oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken mixture, and sauté 3 minutes. Add garlic, and sauté 1 minute. Add broth, beans, and bell peppers, bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer 10 minutes or until chicken is done. Stir in spinach, and simmer 1 minute.

Serves 4

White and Green Chili

Better Homes and Gardens

Make some cornbread to go along with this meal and just toss it right in the bowl with your chili!

- 1 ½ pounds lean ground pork or turkey
- 1 cup chopped onion (2 medium)
- 2 15 ounce cans Great Northern beans (or cannellini beans), rinsed and drained
- 1 16-ounce jar green salsa
- 1 14-ounce can chicken broth
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground cumin
- 2 Tablespoons snipped fresh cilantro
- 1/3 cup sour cream (optional)

In a large skillet, cook ground pork/turkey and onion over medium heat until meat is brown and onion is tender. Drain off fat. Transfer meat mixture to a crock-pot. Stir in beans, salsa, broth, and cumin.

Cover and cook on low for 7 to 8 hours or on high for 3 ½ to 4 hours. Stir in the 2 tablespoons cilantro. If desired, top each serving with sour cream and cilantro.

Serves 6

Store tomatoes at room temperature (above 55 degrees) until they have fully ripened. This will allow them to ripen properly and develop good flavor and aroma. Don't store ripe tomatoes in the fridge. Cold temperatures lessen the flavor in tomatoes.