

Pasta with Sardines

Authentic Sicilian Pasta con le Sarde with sardines, breadcrumbs, and aromatic seasonings. A traditional Italian seafood pasta ready in 35 minutes.

20 min

PREP

15 min

COOK

35 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Medium

DIFFICULTY

Ingredients

- 1 pack pasta
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion
- 2 clove garlic
- 2 sardine
- 1 cup broccoli
- 3 cup breadcrumb
- 1 cup izmir tulum cheese
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

Instructions

1 Cook the pasta

Bring a large pot of salted water to a rolling boil over high heat. Add 1 pack of pasta and cook according to package directions until al dente, usually 8-10 minutes. Reserve 1 cup of pasta cooking water before draining.

2 Toast the breadcrumbs

Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat (160°C/325°F). Add 1 cup of breadcrumbs and cook, stirring constantly, for 3-4 minutes until golden brown and fragrant. Transfer breadcrumbs to a bowl and set aside.

3 Build the sauce base

Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil to the same skillet over medium heat. Add 1 diced onion and cook

for 3-4 minutes, stirring occasionally, until softened and translucent.

4 Add 2 minced garlic cloves to the skillet and cook for 30 seconds until fragrant. Add 3 cups of broccoli florets and sauté for 2-3 minutes until bright green and slightly tender.

5 **Add the sardines**

Gently add 2 cans of drained sardines to the skillet along with 1 teaspoon of red pepper flakes. Cook for 1-2 minutes, using a wooden spoon to gently break the sardines into bite-sized pieces while keeping some chunks intact.

6 Season with 1 teaspoon of salt and black pepper to taste. Add the drained pasta to the skillet along with 1/4 cup of the reserved pasta water.

7 **Finish and serve**

Toss the pasta gently for 1-2 minutes until everything is well combined and the pasta is coated with the sauce, adding more pasta water 2 tablespoons at a time if the mixture seems dry. Remove from heat and sprinkle with the toasted breadcrumbs before serving immediately.

Tips

Choose sardines packed in olive oil for the best flavor and texture. If using fresh sardines, ensure they're properly cleaned and filleted with all bones removed.

Reserve pasta cooking water before draining - the starchy water helps bind the sauce and creates a silky consistency when mixed with the sardines and vegetables.

Toast breadcrumbs slowly over medium-low heat, stirring constantly to achieve even golden color. Rushed breadcrumbs often burn on the outside while remaining pale inside.

Don't overcook the sardines - they need just enough time to warm through and infuse their flavor into the dish. Overcooked sardines become tough and lose their delicate texture.

Use a large skillet or wok for the final mixing to ensure all pasta strands get evenly coated with the sardine mixture and have room to move freely.

Add the dried peppers gradually and taste as you go - their heat level can vary significantly, and you want to enhance rather than overwhelm the dish.

Finish the dish with a drizzle of good quality extra virgin olive oil for added richness and to help all the flavors meld together beautifully.