

Tomato Noodle Rice

Turkish tomato noodle rice with orzo, garlic, olives and herbs. A colorful 20-minute Mediterranean-inspired pilaf perfect for weeknight dinners.

5 min

PREP

15 min

COOK

20 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Medium

DIFFICULTY

Ingredients

- 1.1 lb orzo
- 8 tomato
- 1 red onion
- 3 cup vegetable broth
- 2 clove garlic
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 0.5 cup olive
- 0 basil

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the aromatics**

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in a large heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat (160°C/325°F) until the oil shimmers, about 2 minutes.
- 2** Add 1 diced onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and translucent, about 4-5 minutes.
- 3** Add 2 minced garlic cloves and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
- 4 Toast the noodles**

Add 1/2 cup broken thin noodles or vermicelli pieces to the pan and stir constantly until golden brown and toasted, about 3-4 minutes.
- 5** Add 1.1 pounds rice and stir to coat each grain with the oil and aromatics, about 1-2 minutes until the rice is lightly toasted.

6 **Cook the pilaf**

Pour in 3 cups hot chicken or vegetable broth and add salt and pepper to taste.

7 Bring to a vigorous boil over high heat, then immediately reduce heat to low, cover tightly, and simmer for 18-20 minutes until the rice is tender and liquid is absorbed.

8 **Rest and serve**

Remove from heat and let stand covered for 5 minutes to steam and finish cooking.

9 Fluff the rice and noodles gently with a fork, taste and adjust seasoning, then serve immediately.

Tips

Toast the orzo in olive oil until golden before adding liquid – this adds nutty depth and helps the pasta maintain its texture during cooking.

Use room temperature vegetable broth for more even cooking and better absorption. Cold broth can shock the hot orzo and create uneven results.

Slice garlic thinly rather than mincing to prevent burning during the sautéing process. Burnt garlic will add bitter notes to the finished dish.

Let the dish rest for 5 minutes after cooking with the lid on – this allows the orzo to fully absorb any remaining liquid and develop better texture.

Add fresh basil only at the very end to preserve its bright color and fresh flavor. Cooking basil turns it dark and reduces its aromatic impact.

For extra richness, stir in a pat of butter just before serving. This adds glossy finish and rounds out all the flavors beautifully.

If the mixture seems dry during cooking, add broth 1/4 cup at a time rather than all at once to maintain proper consistency.

Choose firm black olives like Kalamata rather than soft canned olives – they hold their shape better and provide more intense flavor.