

TRUFFLE PASTA

Whenever I'm in midtown Manhattan, I always love to walk downtown a bit before heading into the subway on my way home. Naturally, I can't help myself, so I stop into all the different gourmet shops and markets along the way. One of my favorites is Eataly, and I love walking through their pasta section and picking up something new to test out at home. This week, Truffle Pasta* was on sale, so I gave it a whirl with a duck sausage and mushroom ragu. It was delicious!

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4)

1 lb of truffle pasta*

3 Tablespoons olive oil

1 red onion, thinly sliced

1 shallot, thinly sliced

8 cremini mushrooms, sliced

3 cloves of garlic, minced

2 links of cooked duck sausage, sliced (or sub-in cooked sausage of your choice)

1 cup grated parmesan cheese (small grate)

2 whole eggs, 2 yolks

2 teaspoons truffle paste*

Salt, pepper and red pepper flakes to taste

Chives for garnish

PREPARATION:

In a large pot, boil water. Follow the package instructions

for cooking the pasta. Save at least one cup of the pasta water.

While the pasta is cooking, heat the olive oil in a large skillet. Sauté the red onion and shallot until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add mushrooms and cook for 2 – 3 minutes. Add a splash more oil if too dry. Add in garlic and sausage and cook for one more minute. Season with salt, pepper and red pepper flakes to taste.

□ In a small bowl, whisk the whole eggs and yolks together until blended. Add the truffle paste, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Parmesan cheese, a pinch of salt and pepper, and stir until the ingredients are well mixed. Set aside.

Remove the pasta from the boiling water using a pasta spoon with teeth and add to the mushroom mixture in the skillet. Keeping the heat on low, gently fold together. Add in the egg mixture and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the pasta water. Fold all together. It's okay if the eggs seem to scramble a bit.

□ Taste it and if the pasta seems too dry, continue to add more pasta water a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup at a time until the sauce comes to a consistency you like, being careful not to make it too watery.

□ Plate the pasta in shallow bowls and garnish with the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the parmesan cheese and chives. Serve immediately.

*(*Note – Truffle pasta and truffle paste are easily available on-line for purchase.)*

PORT TONIC

As sad as I am to say goodbye to summer, it seems only right to send it off with a refreshing cocktail. I started drinking these while visiting Portugal. It's a lovely apéritif to enjoy while deciding whether to order the bacalhau or the grilled sardines. It is a takeoff on a gin and tonic with white port replacing the gin. Saúde!

(NOTE: Normally the glass would be filled to the top, but "someone" might have sampled a bit too much before the photo was taken. Just saying...)

INGREDIENTS (1 serving)

2 ounces dry white port

6 ounces tonic water

1 slice orange

1 slice lemon

Ice

Mint for garnish

PREPARATION:

Fill a large goblet or wine glass with ice, stir to chill the glass, strain out water, leave the ice. Take a slice of lemon, then a slice of orange, press and smear them around the inside of the glass. Give each a squeeze to release the juice and drop inside the glass.

Add port, and then tonic. Stir lightly. Enjoy!

GRILLED BROCCOLINI

I'm not a huge fan of broccoli, but somehow, these baby broccolis taste different to me—particularly when I grill them. This is a simple side dish that can be served as is, or with your favorite dip or salad dressing. Tzatziki or a red pepper puree would work great.

INGREDIENTS (serves 3-4)

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup sliced almonds

1 lb broccolini

Olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION:

Place the almonds in a dry skillet and toast them, shaking the pan so that they flip over. You want them lightly browned and not burnt.

Rinse and dry the broccolini. Place on a baking sheet. Brush each spear all over with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.

Heat your grill to 375 degrees. Place the broccolini spears directly on the grates over the heat. Grill until the spears start to char, about five minutes on each side.

Place on a platter and garnish with the toasted almonds.