

Orzo with Spinach and Shrimp



The translation for orzo is "barley," but it's really a pasta.

Orzo's grain-like shape and size offers an interesting change of texture and style to your pasta experience and it works well with any combination of ingredients.

Tonight you'll enjoy orzo pasta shrimp and a lemony Marinara sauce. It's served with lightly dressed baby spinach. The dish is finished with a little shredded Parmesan.

Preparation time: 35 minutes - Servings: 2

Organize Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Prep and organize ingredients so they are easy to add. Cooking's more fun when everything you need is ready to go. Use leftover Marinara Sauce if you've got it, or make some to get started. You'll need 1-2/3 C. red wine if making fresh Marinara Sauce.

Marinara Sauce

1 tsp. olive oil
4 cloves garlic (smashed and chopped)
1/2 C. red wine
1/2 C. yellow onion (chopped)

one 15 oz. can no-salt diced tomatoes
one 15 oz. can regular tomato sauce
another 1/2 C. red wine

2 T. dry basil leaves
1 T. dry oregano leaves
a few dashes Tabasco sauce

1 tsp. olive oil
chopped garlic (from above)
another 2/3 C. red wine

Shrimp

2 tsp. olive oil
10 large, raw deveined and shelled shrimp
(If using frozen shrimp, thaw first.)

1 clove garlic (smashed and chopped)
1/2 tsp. dry oregano leaves
1/3 C. white wine

Orzo Pasta with Spinach

Pasta:

1 C. dry orzo
1 quart lightly salted water

Lemon/Marinara Sauce

1-1/4 C. Marinara Sauce
1/4 C. starchy pasta cooking water
2 T. lemon juice

Dressed Spinach:

2 C. baby spinach leaves (tightly-packed)
2 tsp. olive oil
1 tsp. balsamic vinegar

Garnish:

4 T. shredded Parmesan

Let's Prepare, Cook, and Plate This!

Basic Assembly Instructions

Make marinara sauce (if needed). This dish tastes best when served fresh from the burner. If using frozen shrimp, thaw by running cold water over them periodically for about 15 minutes. You can also place the frozen shrimp in a sealed ziplock bag in a bowl of room temperature water.

Marinara Sauce

1. Toss 1/2 of the chopped garlic in olive oil over medium-high heat until garlic starts to turn golden brown. Add ½ C. red wine and bring to boil. Cook 1 minute.
2. Add onion and toss until wine is almost gone.
3. Add both cans of tomato sauce (rinse cans with additional second 1/2 C. red wine) and add to sauce.
4. Add spices and Tabasco. Bring to boil. Cover, reduce heat to low and cook 10-minutes.
5. Using a separate sauté pan, brown the remaining half of the chopped garlic in oil. Add another 2/3 C. wine, bring to a boil, cook for about a minute and turn off heat. Add this additional wine and garlic to the large pan. Stir well and remove from burner.

Get Ready to Cook Pasta

Place 1 quart of water for cooking pasta on to Boil.

Shrimp

Heat oil in a small sauté pan and toss thawed shrimp about 1 minute per side or until they begin to turn pink. Add garlic, oregano and wine and toss until wine disappears. Remove from heat.

Orzo Pasta with Spinach/Serve

Pasta:

Drop dry orzo into boiling water and cook 8-minutes. (Set a timer so you don't forget.) When pasta is cooked to desired tenderness, reserve 1/4 C. of the cooking water and set aside. Drain and rinse orzo.

Lemon/Marinara Sauce:

Measure 1-1/4 C. Marinara Sauce into a bowl and add measured starchy pasta cooking water and lemon juice. Stir well.

Dressed Spinach:

Toss spinach in a large bowl with olive oil and vinegar. Set aside.

Serve:

Using the pasta cooking kettle, toss cooked pasta and Lemon/Marinara sauce until pasta is well coated. Divide pasta mixture between two serving plates and arrange shrimp over the top of each serving. Divide dressed spinach between plates by mounding it around the pasta. Garnish with Parmesan.

What I've Learned from this Recipe

Just a reminder that shrimp cook quickly. They're ready to eat within a few minutes of cooking. If overcooked, shrimp become tough.

Let us know what you think, and ask any questions you may have! chezdon@plate6.com

