

Prima Vera Sauce over Grilled Polenta

It's harvest time, and this is when we have access to seemingly endless fresh-from-the-garden choices for a prima vera sauce: onions, red and green peppers, spinach, zucchini and summer squash, to name a few. A good Prima Vera sauce with fresh vegetables is guaranteed during this season.

Serve your Prima Vera Sauce over grilled polenta tonight!

Preparation Time: 2 hours and 45 minutes (if making polenta). 1 hour if using pre-made polenta.

Serves: 2

Organize Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Prep and organize ingredients on small plates or in bowls so they are easy to add. Just a little preparation makes a difference when cooking a meal. Have 1-2/3 C. red wine handy for the Marinara.

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

1/2 of the chopped garlic (above)

another 2/3 C. red wine

Dressed Spinach

2 C. spinach leaves (chopped)

1 tsp. olive oil

1 tsp. balsamic vinegar

2 tsp. low-sodium vegetable broth

Polenta

2 tsp. olive oil

1/2 C. onion (chopped)

4 C. water

1 Not Chick'n Bouillon cube

1 C. polenta corn meal

1 T. canola oil (for grilling)

Prima Vera Sauce

1 Field Roast Apple Sausage (or equivalent plant-based choice)

Mushrooms/ Zucchini/Summer Squash:

3 tsp. olive oil

6 medium mushrooms (sliced)

1 small 6" zucchini (sliced)

1 small 6" yellow summer squash (sliced)

2 cloves garlic (smashed and chopped)

Seared Vegetables and Additions:

2 tsp. olive oil

2/3 C. yellow onion (sliced)

2/3 C. of a green pepper (cut into 1" chunks)

2/3 C. of a red pepper (cut into 1" chunks)

4 Kalamata olives (chopped)

2 T. capers

1 - 1/2 cups marinara sauce (recipe above)

Garnish:

2 T. shredded Parmesan

Let's Prepare, Cook, and Plate This!

Basic Assembly Instructions

Using polenta-style cornmeal, make the Polenta and then the Marinara Sauce.. Once made, mold polenta and cool for slicing and grilling. You can also choose to use a tube of commercially made polenta.

If using commercially made polenta, cut it into 1/2" rounds and follow grilling instructions below.

Polenta

1. Using a large saucepan, toss onions in oil until onions turn translucent.
2. Reserve 1 C. of water and bring remaining 3 C. water and bouillon cube to a boil.
3. Pour 1 C. water over dry polenta and stir to moisten all of the polenta. The moisture will keep the polenta from clumping when you add it to the water. Slowly stir the wet polenta into the boiling water.
4. Cook 15 minutes over low heat. Stir often to make sure there are no lumps and to keep corn meal from sticking to pan.
5. When polenta is cooked, pack it into an oiled 4" X 8" loaf pan and refrigerate 2 hours.
6. When cooled and set, slice into 3/4" thick slices and grill.

Grilling

Grill slices, or commercially prepared rounds, on a well-oiled griddle until griddle marks are seared into the polenta slices. Set aside to cool. If you grilled rectangular slices, cut them diagonally into triangles before serving.

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 1/2 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 2/3 C. more wine, bring to a boil, cook for about a minute and turn off heat. Let it rest until the 10-minute timer sounds and the sauce in the large pan has finished cooking.
6. Add the additional wine and garlic to the large pan. Stir well and remove from burner.

Field Roast Sausage

1. Remove and discard outer plastic casing from Field Roast Sausages and slice in half lengthwise.
2. Grill on stovetop until well browned. Remove from heat and let cool.
3. Select 1 whole (2 halves) sausage for tonight's meal and thin-slice into half-rounds.
4. Set aside.

**Prima Vera Sauce
(Mushrooms/Zucchini/Summer Squash)**

1. Measure olive oil into a sauté pan and brown mushrooms in hot oil. Remove from pan and set aside.
2. Using same pan, brown zucchini on both sides until brown spots begin to appear. Remove from pan.
3. Repeat the process with the summer squash. When summer squash is browned, add garlic to the pan and toss until garlic becomes fragrant. Remove from pan and set aside.

**Prima Vera Sauce
(Seared Vegetables)**

1. Sauté onion and chopped peppers in olive oil until onions begin to brown.
2. Add chopped olives, capers and marinara sauce. Bring to a boil and return all vegetables and sliced sausage to the pan.
3. Toss for about a minute to thoroughly reheat.

Dressed Spinach

Place spinach in a large bowl and toss with oil, vinegar and broth mixture.

Plate

1. Place 3 triangles (or 3 rounds) polenta on one side of each dinner plate.
2. Spoon 2 C. Prima Vera Sauce over polenta.
3. Garnish Polenta Prima Vera with Parmesan.
4. Arrange 1/2 of the dressed spinach on the other side of each plate.

(Store leftover polenta in the fridge for Wednesday's meal).

What I've Learned from this Recipe

Marinara Note: A note about browning garlic and creating the garlic/wine reduction. Always start with a cold pan when browning garlic. Put the garlic and oil in at the same time and then turn on heat. When the garlic is light brown, add the wine and bring to a boil and simmer for about 5 minutes. When cooking marinara sauce, you'll do this twice. Once for the main body of sauce and a second time when preparing the extra garlic and wine that's added after the sauce finishes cooking.

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