

# Baked Sausage, Mozzarella & Rigatoni Pasta

*with Spinach & Cucumber Salad*

In this delicious recipe, we're honoring authentic Italian flavor with ingredients like rigatoni, fresh mozzarella and sweet pork sausage. Despite its name, this style of sausage is more herbaceous than it is sweet, made with savory seasonings like sage, parsley and fennel seeds. (The name is used to distinguish it from its spicier counterparts.) Here, we're browning the sausage before finishing it in the oven with the pasta and tomato sauce, all topped with melty mozzarella.



## Ingredients

- ¾ Pound Italian Sausage
- ¾ Pound Rigatoni Pasta
- 1 28-Ounce Can Whole, Peeled Tomatoes
- ½ Pound Fresh Mozzarella
- 5 Ounces Baby Spinach
- 3 Cloves Garlic
- 1 English Cucumber
- 1 Yellow Onion
- 1 Bunch Basil

## Knick Knacks

- 2 Tablespoons Red Wine Vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon Dijon Mustard
- 1 Teaspoon Dried Italian Seasoning

Makes 4 Servings

About 600 Calories Per Serving

Cooking Time: 35 to 45 minutes





# Instructions

For cooking tips & tablet view, visit [blueapron.com/recipes/fp53](https://blueapron.com/recipes/fp53)

1



## Prepare the ingredients:

Preheat the oven to 450°F. Heat a large pot of salted water to boiling on high. Peel and thinly slice the garlic and onion. Place the tomatoes in a bowl; using your hands, gently break the tomatoes apart. Pick the basil leaves off the stems; discard the stems. Tear the mozzarella cheese into small pieces. Thinly slice the cucumber into rounds.

2



## Brown the sausage:

In a large pot, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **sausage**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, frequently breaking the meat apart with a spoon, 4 to 6 minutes, or until browned.

3



## Make the sauce:

Add the **garlic** and **onion** to the pot of sausage; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 1 to 2 minutes, or until slightly softened. Stir in the **tomatoes** and **half the Italian seasoning**; season with salt and pepper. Heat to boiling on high. Once boiling, reduce the heat to medium and simmer 6 to 8 minutes, or until slightly reduced in volume. Remove from heat.

4



## Cook & bake the pasta:

While the sauce simmers, add the **pasta** to the pot of boiling water. Cook 7 to 9 minutes, or until al dente (still slightly firm to the bite). Drain thoroughly and transfer to the pot of sauce. Add **all but a pinch of the basil** (roughly chopping the leaves just before adding). Stir to combine; season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer the mixture to a baking dish. Evenly top with the **mozzarella cheese**; season with salt and pepper. Bake 13 to 15 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and lightly browned. Remove from the oven. Let stand for 2 minutes before serving.

5



## Make the vinaigrette:

While the pasta bakes, in a medium bowl, combine the **vinegar**, **mustard** and **remaining Italian seasoning**; season with salt and pepper to taste. Slowly whisk in **3 tablespoons of olive oil** until well combined. Set aside.

6



## Make the salad & serve your dish:

In a large bowl, combine the **spinach**, **cucumber** and enough of the **vinaigrette** to coat the salad (you may have extra vinaigrette); toss to combine and season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a serving dish. Garnish the **baked pasta** with the **remaining basil** (tearing the leaves just before adding). Enjoy!