

# Spiced Pork & Baked Rigatoni Pasta

*with Fresh Mozzarella & Spinach Salad*

In this recipe, we're making a rich and hearty meat sauce with ground pork, hand-crushed tomatoes and classic Italian spices. (Be gentle when you crush the tomatoes! Their juices may spray.) We're mixing our sauce with chewy rigatoni pasta, topping it with silky mozzarella cheese and baking it all in the oven until the top crisps up and the flavors meld to perfection. A simple spinach and cucumber salad on the side brings color and balance to this robust meal.



## Ingredients

- 1½ Pounds Ground Pork
- 10 Ounces Rigatoni Pasta
- 1 28-Ounce Can Whole Peeled Tomatoes
- ½ Pound Fresh Mozzarella Cheese
- 4 Ounces Spinach
- 3 Cloves Garlic
- 1 Persian Cucumber
- 1 Yellow Onion

## Knick Knacks

- 2 Tablespoons Red Wine Vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon Whole Grain Dijon Mustard
- 1 Tablespoon Rigatoni Spice Blend  
(Whole Fennel Seeds, Ground Fennel, Ground Coriander, Italian Seasoning & Garlic Powder)

**Makes 4 Servings**

**About 700 Calories Per Serving**

**Prep Time: 10 min | Cook Time: 35 to 45 min**



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**Recipe #235**



1



## Cook the pasta:

Preheat the oven to 475°F. Heat a large pot of salted water to boiling on high. Once boiling, add the **pasta**. Cook 9 to 11 minutes, or until al dente (still slightly firm to the bite). Drain thoroughly and rinse under cold water to stop the cooking process. Rinse and wipe out the pot.

2



## Prepare the ingredients:

While the pasta cooks, wash and dry the fresh produce. Peel and thinly slice the garlic. Peel, halve and thinly slice the onion. Tear the cheese into bite-sized pieces. Thinly slice the cucumber into rounds. Place the tomatoes in a bowl; gently break apart with your hands.

3



## Start the sauce:

In the pot used to cook the pasta, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **garlic** and **onion**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 2 to 4 minutes, or until softened and fragrant. Add the **ground pork** and **spice blend**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, frequently breaking the meat apart with a spoon, 2 to 3 minutes, or until the pork is lightly browned and cooked through. Carefully drain off and discard any drippings from the pot.

4



## Finish the sauce:

Add the **tomatoes** to the pot; cook, stirring occasionally, 6 to 8 minutes, or until thoroughly combined and slightly reduced in volume. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper to taste.

5



## Assemble & bake the pasta:

Add the **cooked pasta** to the pot of **finished sauce**; stir to thoroughly combine and season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a baking dish. Evenly top with the **cheese**; season with salt and pepper. Bake 12 to 14 minutes, or until slightly crispy on top and the cheese has melted. Remove from the oven and let stand for 2 minutes before serving.

6



## Make the salad & serve your dish:

While the pasta bakes, in a small bowl, combine the **vinegar** and **mustard**; season with salt and pepper to taste. Slowly whisk in **2 tablespoons of olive oil** until well combined. Just before serving, in a large bowl, combine the **spinach**, **cucumber** and enough of the **vinaigrette** to coat the salad (you may have extra vinaigrette). Toss to mix and season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a serving dish. Serve with the **baked pasta**. Enjoy!