

Baked Rigatoni & Creamy Tomato Sauce

with Spinach, Mushrooms, & Fresh Mozzarella

TIME: 35-45 minutes

SERVINGS: 4

Tonight is all about the cheesy, hearty flavors of baked pasta. We're coating fresh rigatoni with a simple tomato sauce that gets a boost of silky texture from heavy cream. Mushrooms and spinach add hearty texture and balance out the richness. For another layer of savory flavor, we're topping the pasta with fresh mozzarella, then baking it to melt the cheese and bring all the flavors together.



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Ingredients



1 1/4 lbs
FRESH RIGATONI
PASTA



1 14-oz can
WHOLE PEELED
TOMATOES



1/2 lb
FRESH
MOZZARELLA
CHEESE



2 Tbsps
TOMATO PASTE



1/4 cup
GRATED
PECORINO
CHEESE



6 oz
CREMINI
MUSHROOMS



2 cloves
GARLIC



1/2 lb
SPINACH



1
SHALLOT



1/4 cup
HEAVY CREAM



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1 Prepare the ingredients:

- ☐ Preheat the oven to 475°F.
- ☐ Heat a large pot of salted water to boiling on high.
- ☐ Wash and dry the fresh produce.
- ☐ Remove and discard the mushroom stems; quarter the caps.
- ☐ Peel and thinly slice the shallot.
- ☐ Peel and roughly chop the garlic.
- ☐ Place the tomatoes in a bowl; gently break apart with your hands.
- ☐ Tear the mozzarella cheese into bite-sized pieces.



2 Cook the pasta:

- ☐ Add the **pasta** to the pot of boiling water. Cook 5 to 6 minutes, or until just shy of al dente (still slightly firm to the bite).
- ☐ Turn off the heat. Reserving **½ cup of the pasta cooking water**, drain thoroughly and return to the pot.



3 Start the sauce:

- ☐ While the pasta cooks, in a large pan, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil on medium-high until hot.
- ☐ Add the **mushrooms** and cook, stirring occasionally, 4 to 5 minutes, or until lightly browned and slightly softened.
- ☐ Add the **shallot** and **garlic**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes, or until softened and fragrant.



4 Finish the sauce:

- ☐ Add the **tomato paste** to the pan; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, 1 to 2 minutes, or until dark red and fragrant.
- ☐ Add the **tomatoes** and **heavy cream** (shaking the bottle before opening); season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes, or until slightly reduced in volume. Turn off the heat.



5 Finish the pasta:

- ☐ Add the **finished sauce**, **spinach**, and **half the reserved pasta cooking water** to the pot of **cooked pasta**. Stir vigorously until the pasta is thoroughly coated and the spinach has wilted. (If the sauce seems dry, gradually add the remaining pasta cooking water to achieve your desired consistency.) Season with salt and pepper to taste.



6 Bake the pasta & serve your dish:

- ☐ Transfer the **finished pasta** to a baking dish. Top with the **mozzarella cheese** and **half the pecorino cheese**.
- ☐ Bake 9 to 11 minutes, or until the cheese has melted and the sauce is slightly thickened.
- ☐ Remove from the oven and top with the **remaining pecorino cheese**. Let stand for at least 2 minutes before serving. Enjoy!