

SPAGHETTI with SHRIMP and ARTICHOKE PESTO

Serves 4.

By Dennis W. Viau; modified from a restaurant recipe.

This is another simple pasta dish that will take longer to heat the water and cook the spaghetti than to make the pesto sauce. Although this recipe uses only four shrimp per serving (typical of some restaurant recipes) you can double the shrimp for a tastier dish.



Ingredients:

1 pound (454g) spaghetti, linguine, or any pasta you prefer
2 cloves garlic, minced or crushed through a garlic press
1 tablespoon chopped fresh Italian (flat leaf) parsley
1 cup (160g) artichoke hearts
¼ cup (30g) grated Parmesan or Romano cheese
Juice from 1 lemon
2 to 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
2 to 3 tablespoons pure (cooking) olive oil
16 large shrimp (200g), peeled and deveined (more shrimp if you prefer)
¼ cup (30ml) dry white wine
Parmesan or Roman cheese, shaved, for garnish

Directions:

Start heating the water for the spaghetti. When it comes to a boil, add the spaghetti and a tablespoon of salt. Cook according to package directions.

While the water is heating and the spaghetti is cooking, combine the garlic, parsley, artichoke hearts, cheese, lemon juice, and extra virgin olive oil in a food processor and pulse until nearly smooth but slightly chunky. Adjust for salt and pepper. Cover and set aside.

Heat the cooking olive oil in a skillet and add the cleaned shrimp. Sauté until the flesh turns pink and the shrimp are barely cooked through. Remove from the pan and set aside.

Add the wine to the skillet and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until most of the liquid has evaporated. Return the shrimp to the skillet and add the artichoke pesto. Heat thoroughly.

When the pasta is cooked, drain and add to the skillet, stirring and turning to coat the pasta evenly. Divide the spaghetti among 4 dishes and place four cooked shrimp on each dish. Garnish with shaved cheese and serve.

The **Step By Step** guide begins on the following page.

STEP-BY-STEP

1



This is my *mise en place* for this dish. Although I usually get my lemons from a neighbor's tree here in the trailer park, all the lemons on her tree were green. (This summer they'll be ripe.) So I bought a lemon this time. The jar in the center back is the artichoke hearts.

2



The artichoke hearts I typically stock are packed in water, vinegar, and oil. To remove some of the vinegar flavor, I put the artichoke hearts in water and stored them in the refrigerator overnight.

3

Very little prep work is needed for this dish. Chop the fresh flat leaf parsley fairly well after removing and discarding the stems.

Meanwhile, start heating the water for the spaghetti. When it comes to a boil, add salt and the spaghetti. Cook according to package directions.

4

The shrimp I used was already shelled and deveined, but the tail shells were still on them. To prepare them for this dish, I removed and discarded the tail shells.

5



Combine the garlic, parsley, artichoke hearts, cheese, lemon juice, salt and pepper in a food processor and pulse until broken down and nearly smooth. Add the oil and mix quickly.

6



The pesto doesn't need to be reduced to a fine purée. It can be slightly grainy.

7



Heat the pure (cooking) olive oil in a skillet and sauté the shrimp until they change color and are barely cooked through. Overcooking the shrimp will make them tough and chewy.

8



Remove the shrimp from the skillet and add the wine. Simmer to reduce until nearly all the liquid is evaporated.

9



Return the shrimp to the skillet and add the pesto. Heat thoroughly. Meanwhile, the spaghetti should be nearly cooked by now.

10



When the spaghetti is cooked, drain and add it to the skillet. Stir and turn to coat the pasta evenly with the pesto.



To plate, place a generous portion of the spaghetti in a bowl and add 4 pieces of shrimp (or more shrimp if you cooked more). Garnish with some shaved Parmesan or Romano cheese and serve.

Conclusion

One thing I like about restaurant recipes is that they are typically quick to make. Portion control is typically an issue in restaurants that are conscientious about profits. Therefore, the original recipe called for only 4 shrimp per serving. For my dinner guests I would be more generous, at least doubling the amount of shrimp.