

My favorite chef in New York is Daniel Boulud of Daniel's. It is a warm, friendly, classy restaurant on the upper East Side. Here my adaption of Daniel's recipe — the best thing is that you can keep most of the ingredients in the cupboard — just pick up scallions and eggplant at the market and you have a delicious supper.

Tante Marie's Vegetarian Pasta

Ingredients

1 lb. penne
1/4 cup olive oil
1 small eggplant, cut in 1/2-inch dice
1/2 cup scallions, white part only
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 6-oz. jar marinated artichoke hearts,
drained and cut into 1/2-inch dice
1/4 cup sun-dried tomatoes, diced
1/4 cup small black olives, pitted
2 Tbs. small capers, rinsed
dash of Tobasco
salt and pepper

Instructions

To cook the eggplant, heat half the olive oil in an 8 to 10 inch saute pan; when hot, toss in the eggplant all at once and stir over medium high heat until lightly colored, about 5 minutes. Remove the cooked eggplant and drain on paper towels.

To make the sauce, in the same pan, heat the remaining olive oil with the scallions and a sprinkling of salt. Cook over medium high heat until the onions are soft. Add the garlic and cook another minute or two. Add the artichokes, sun-dried tomatoes, olives, capers, and the eggplant with Tobasco and salt and pepper. Cook, stirring for another 5 to 7 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasoning.

Ten minutes before eating, bring a large pan of water to a boil. Add salt, and the pasta and stir until the pasta comes to a boil again. Simmer gently, stirring occasionally until the pasta is tender when tasted. Drain off most of the water, return the pasta to the cooking pot, and toss in all the vegetable mixture. Mix well, taste and adjust the seasoning. Serve with Parmesan cheese, if desired.

Serves 4.

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(Recipe adapted from "Cooking with Daniel Boulud")