

SICILIAN PASTA ALLA NORMA

Recipe Details

- **Difficulty:** Easy
 - **Cost:** Low
 - **Prep Time:** 15 minutes
 - **Cook Time:** 20 minutes
 - **Servings:** 4
 - **Cuisine:** Italian
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Ingredients

- 11 oz rigatoni (or other short pasta)
 - 1 ½ lbs fresh tomatoes (Roma or plum)
 - 2 medium eggplants
 - 1 garlic clove
 - 2 tbsp olive oil
 - 4 oz ricotta salata, grated
 - 1 small bunch fresh basil
 - Salt, to taste
 - Black pepper, to taste
 - 1 ¼ cups peanut oil (or vegetable oil), for frying
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Equipment Needed

- Large pot
 - Skillet or frying pan
 - Colander
 - Paper towels
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Instructions

1. Prepare the tomato sauce

- Bring a pot of water to a boil. Add the tomatoes for 1–2 minutes to loosen the skins.

Drain, let cool slightly, then peel.

- Mash the peeled tomatoes with a fork.
- Heat olive oil in a skillet with the garlic. Add the tomatoes with ½ cup water, season with salt and pepper, and cook until thickened (about 15 minutes). Remove garlic.

2. Prepare the eggplants

- Wash and dry the eggplants. Trim and cut into cubes.
- Place in a colander, sprinkle with coarse salt, and let sit 30 minutes to draw out bitterness.
- Pat dry, then fry in hot peanut oil until golden brown. Drain on paper towels.

3. Cook the pasta

- Boil pasta in salted water until al dente. Drain.

4. Assemble the dish

- Toss pasta with tomato sauce and torn basil leaves.
 - Top with fried eggplant and plenty of ricotta salata.
 - Garnish with whole basil leaves and serve.
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Tips & Tricks

- Can't find ricotta salata? Substitute with mild feta (though flavor will differ).
- Always fry eggplant in small batches for the best texture.
- Add a pinch of red pepper flakes if you like a little heat.