

Pasta with Zucchini and Sausage

Cooking Times

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 12 oz short pasta (penne, rigatoni, or fusilli)
 - 2 Italian sausages (about 7 oz total), casing removed
 - 1 medium zucchini, diced
 - 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
 - 1/4 small onion, finely chopped
 - 1 small piece chili pepper (or pinch red pepper flakes)
 - 1/4 cup dry white wine
 - 1/2 cup hot water or broth
 - Salt and black pepper to taste
 - 2 tbsp chopped fresh basil **or** mint
 - 1/2 cup grated **Parmigiano Reggiano** or Pecorino Romano
 - Reserved pasta cooking water (as needed)
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Instructions

1. **Cook the pasta**
Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook the pasta until al dente. Reserve about 1 cup of pasta water before draining.
2. **Prepare the soffritto**
In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and chili pepper and sauté until soft and fragrant.
3. **Cook the sausage**
Increase the heat and add the crumbled sausage. Cook for about 2 minutes, breaking it up with a spoon until lightly browned.
4. **Deglaze with wine**
Pour in the white wine and let it cook until the alcohol evaporates.
5. **Add liquid and simmer**
Add the hot water or broth and allow the sausage to simmer for a few minutes.
6. **Cook the zucchini**
Add the diced zucchini and cook for 2–3 minutes until slightly tender but still bright.
7. **Season**
Add salt, black pepper, and chopped basil or mint.
8. **Combine with pasta**
Add the drained pasta to the skillet. Toss well, adding a little pasta cooking water to help create a creamy sauce.
9. **Finish with cheese**
Stir in grated **Parmigiano Reggiano** or Pecorino Romano and mix until the pasta is glossy

and well coated.

Serve immediately.

Tips & Tricks

Use good sausage

Italian sausage with fennel works beautifully in this dish.

Don't overcook the zucchini

They should stay slightly firm to keep their flavor and texture.

Creamier sauce trick

Always add pasta water slowly while tossing the pasta — the starch helps emulsify the sauce.

Extra flavor option

Add a tablespoon of butter at the end for an even silkier finish.