

SUN-DRIED TOMATO PASTA

SERVES: 6 | SERVING SIZE: 1 cup prepared pasta topped with 1 tablespoon grated parmesan cheese

PREP: 15 minutes | READY: 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 8 ounces dry penne pasta, preferably whole grain
- 1 tablespoon olive oil or oil from jarred sun-dried tomatoes
- 3/4 cup diced onion
- 3 tablespoons real bacon bits (such as Oscar Mayer Real Bacon Bits)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 cup white wine (such as Pinot Grigio)
- 4 tablespoons (2 ounces) reduced-fat cream cheese (such as Philadelphia 1/3 less fat Neufchâtel cheese)
- 1 jar (4 ounces) oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, julienned (about 10 to 11 sun-dried tomato halves)
- 1 container (5 ounces) fresh baby spinach, washed and dried
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 cup (1 ounce) plus 6 tablespoons freshly grated parmesan cheese, divided
- 1 tablespoon fresh-squeezed lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley (optional garnish)



DIRECTIONS

Cook pasta according to package directions, omitting salt. **Reserve 1 cup of pasta water before draining cooked pasta** (this can be used later to loosen the pasta sauce if it's too thick).

While pasta is cooking, heat oil in a large skillet over medium-low heat and sauté onion and bacon bits until onion softens; about 3 to 4 minutes. Add garlic and red pepper flakes and sauté an additional 2 minutes.

Add tomato paste and sauté 3 minutes, stirring frequently. Add wine and stir, loosening any fond that has developed on the bottom of the skillet.

Turn heat to low, add cream cheese, sun-dried tomatoes, and spinach. Gently stir until cream cheese melts into the sauce and spinach wilts; about 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in salt, pepper, 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese, and lemon juice. **If desired, use reserved pasta water to loosen sauce if it's too thick, adding a couple tablespoons at a time.**

One serving consists of 1 cup sun-dried tomato pasta topped with 1 tablespoon parmesan cheese and minced fresh parsley as an optional garnish.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING

308 calories, 11 g total fat, 3.5 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 16 mg cholesterol, 575 mg sodium, 38 g total carbohydrate, 6 g dietary fiber, 3.5 g total sugars, 0 g added sugars, 12 g protein, 0 mcg (0%) vitamin D, 164 mg (15%) calcium, 3 mg (15%) iron, 499 mg (10%) potassium