

Orecchiette and Broccoli alla Franca



I've known Franca almost as long as I know my husband (39 years). They were high school friends and anytime we visit my husband's hometown, Reggio Emilia (about 30 minutes west of Bologna), we always wind up at Franca's house for dinner. Her culinary prowess is as acclaimed as her affable personality, wit and contagious laugh. Recently I asked her for one of her recipes that I could share with GI News readers; she wrote this up for me in less than 5 minutes!

Serves 4.

Ingredients

1 heaping tablespoon kosher salt
1 2-lb. head of fresh broccoli
8 oz. uncooked orecchiette
1 oz. freshly grated pecorino romano cheese
1-2 cloves garlic, minced
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Directions

1. Bring 5 quarts of water to a boil and add the salt.
 2. In the meantime, wash the broccoli and divide it up into small florets, trim the stems and cut into small slices.
 3. When the water starts to boil, add the broccoli and the pasta at the same time. Cook over moderate heat for 10-11 minutes, stirring frequently with a wooden spoon.
 4. While the pasta and broccoli are cooking, add half of the cheese, the garlic, 2-3 tablespoons of the cooking water and 1 tablespoon of oil in a small bowl; mix to form a dense paste.
 5. When the pasta and broccoli are cooked, drain them, keeping aside $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the cooking water.
 6. Place the pasta quickly in a preheated serving bowl, add the remaining olive oil (2 tablespoons) and the cheese paste. Add some of the reserved cooking water if the pasta is too dry. Serve immediately with abundant cheese sprinkled on top.
- Franca says: Instead of the garlic, one can substitute 2-3 anchovies in oil, smashing them.

Nutritional Information

Calories: 385
Carbohydrates: 53 g
Protein: 16 g
Fat: 14 g
Saturated Fat: 3 g
Cholesterol: 7 mg
Fiber: 9 g

GI Value: 38 - low