



Fletcher's Favorite Fast Fresh Tomato-Basil Pasta

By Dylan Sabuco

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** 20 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

simmer: to cook a food gently, usually in a liquid, until softened.

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

Equipment

- Large pot + lid
- Liquid measuring cup
- Dry measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Colander or strainer
- Cutting board + kid-safe knife
- Medium mixing bowl
- Wooden spoon

Ingredients

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- 1 C or 4 C water (1 C for class; 4 C for home)
- 1/2 to 1 C olive oil

- 2 to 3 C pasta of choice—I chose rigatoni! ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free pasta of your choice)******
- 1 pkg cherry tomatoes, roughly 2 C ******(for NIGHTSHADE/TOMATO ALLERGY sub 2 zucchini, chopped by kids)******
- 1 handful fresh basil leaves
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 vegetable bouillon cube
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 T Parmesan cheese, optional ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free Parmesan cheese or nutritional yeast)******

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Gluten/Wheat: Substitute gluten-free/nut-free pasta of your choice.

Nightshade/Tomato: For 1 pkg cherry tomatoes, substitute 2 zucchini, chopped by kids.

Dairy: Substitute dairy-free/nut-free Parmesan cheese or nutritional yeast.

Instructions

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intro

Erin Fletcher is the Sticky Fingers food geek-in-chief and owner, and this dish has been in her life since she was 13. Nothing beats a recipe that is a core food memory. After making this simply delicious one-pot meal, you will see why, and it will probably be one of your new favorites. All you need to do is combine fresh tomatoes and basil, olive oil, and a bouillon cube in a big pot, along with your pasta of choice. And just like that, you have one of the most mouth-watering tomato sauces! I can't wait for you to dive in and try Fletcher's Favorite Fast Fresh Tomato-Basil Pasta!

boil + chop

Start by boiling **4 cups of water** and **1 big pinch of salt** in a large pot. While the water comes to a boil, roughly chop **1 package cherry tomatoes, 1 handful fresh basil leaves, 2 garlic cloves, 1 teaspoon salt**, and **1/2 teaspoon black pepper** and mix them together in a medium mixing bowl. When the water is boiling, pour in **2 to 3 cups of your chosen pasta**. Cook for 5 minutes, then drain the pasta

into a colander. The pasta should still be hard.

measure + simmer

Measure **1/2 to 1 cup olive oil** and add that to your large pot. Turn the heat to medium low and pour in all the pasta, tomato mixture, and **1 vegetable bouillon cube**. Cover with a lid and cook for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the pasta is soft and the other ingredients have formed a chunky sauce.

sprinkle + serve

If you and your family are feeling cheesy, sprinkle with a tiny bit of **Parmesan cheese**. Time to dig in! This dish pairs perfectly with an additional sprinkle of Crunchy "Gremolata" Breadcrumbs (see recipe). "Buon appetito" (Bwohn ahp-peh-TEE-toh) or "Enjoy your meal" in Italian!

Featured Ingredient: Olive Oil!

Hi! I'm Olive Oil!

"My name is Olive and I'm just one type of cooking oil or fat. However, I'm one of the very healthiest you can use! I come from olives, the fruit of the olive tree. Olive oil is often a pretty golden or light green color and has a unique flavor. You would be hard pressed (pressed, get it?) to find a better, tastier oil!"

Olive trees have been cultivated throughout the Mediterranean for thousands of years since the 8th millennium BCE (sometime between 8000-7001 BCE.) However, there is fossil evidence of wild olive trees originating millions of years ago and North Africans using the fruit as food and its oil for fuel around 100,000 years ago.

The Ancient Greeks and Romans used olive oil in their cuisines. Archaeological evidence shows that olive oil was made from olives in 6000 BCE.

Olive oil has been a traded agricultural product since at least 2000 BCE.

The word "oil" came from a word that referred specifically to olive oil. It came from Middle English, from the Old French "olie," and from the Latin "oleum" (olive oil). The Latin word "olea" in the olive tree's Latin name is translated as either "olive" or "oil."

Olive trees (*Olea europaea*) are long-lived evergreens with silvery green, leathery, narrow leaves and tiny, off-white flowers followed by fruit.

An olive is a small, bitter oval fruit, green when unripe and black when ripe, used for food and its extracted oil.

The fruit is too bitter to be eaten fresh. The phytochemical "oleuropein" causes the bitterness. To leach the oleuropein from the olives, they must be cured by treating the olives for a few days with lye, which is caustic, or for a few weeks or months with a brine solution before pickling or preserving them in their own oil. Most curing methods also include fermentation.

When extracting the oil from the olives, the whole fruit is ground into a paste and then pressed to separate the fruit's oil from its water content. After that, it goes through a filtering process unless sold as unfiltered olive oil, which looks a bit cloudy.

Cold pressing is an extraction method that does not use temperatures above 80 F. Olive oil processed by

this method retains more of its nutrients and flavor.

Olive oil grades are: Virgin, extracted by mechanical rather than chemical means; Lampante virgin, produced by mechanical means but needing further refinement to be edible—"Lampante" comes from the Italian word "lampa," meaning "lamp," as it was once used for oil lamps—and can be refined or used for industrial purposes; Refined is olive oil processed to remove defects in taste, odor, or acidity; and Olive Pomace oil, extracted from the olive pulp after the first press with the use of solvents, and then refined and mixed with virgin olive oils. It must be labeled as Olive Pomace Oil.

International Olive Council (IOC) standards for quality from the highest to the lowest: Extra Virgin: cold-pressed and the purest oil with an excellent fruity taste and odor and a free acidity of 0.8 percent (amount of fatty acids in 100 grams of oil); Virgin: a reasonably good taste and smell with 2 percent free acidity; and Refined: oil that has been refined using charcoal and other chemicals to remove high acidity and defects affecting taste or smell. Refined olive oils might be labeled Pure or just Olive oil.

The standards of the Agriculture Department of the United States, which is not part of the IOC, include Extra Virgin; Virgin; Refined; Olive Oil, a mixture of Virgin and Refined oils with a good to average taste; and Virgin Olive Oil Not Fit For Human Consumption Without Further Processing, a virgin oil with high acidity and poor flavor and odor. The IOC refers to this as Lampante oil. It cannot be sold and requires refining.

Extra virgin olive oil, or EVOO, is used as an ingredient in salad dressings and raw or cold foods, as a dip for bread with garlic or balsamic vinegar, as a finishing condiment, and when cooking with smaller amounts of oil, like sautéing or shallow frying. However, because it is more expensive than virgin and refined olive oils, it is not generally used when more oil is required, such as in deep-fat frying.

Extra virgin olive oil is considered a heart-healthy fat since it consists of primarily unsaturated fats, compared to saturated fats. It also contains polyphenols, antioxidants which help prevent cancer, and vitamins E and K.