

Linguine with Clams and Zucchini

LINGUINE CON VONGOLE E ZUCCHINI

A popular and classic primo of the Amalfi Coast, this recipe is an adaptation from Ristorante Lo Scoglio in Marina del Cantone. One of the servers at the restaurant gave me a tip for success when making this— the seemingly overcooked zucchini in the method makes for very flavorful oil in which to cook the clams. And a shopkeeper in Sorrento offered it's always better to use a flat pasta shape like linguine so the sauce or condiments adhere to the pasta better than using a round shape like spaghetti.

Makes 4 servings

The amount given with a “QB” ingredient is a suggestion. “QB” stands for “quanto basta.” It basically means in Italian “how much is needed.” It’s up to you how much or how little to use. The amount may also change due to the quality of the ingredient or how old it is.

- *4 large garlic cloves, peeled QB*
- *About a 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil*
- *About 1 1/2 pounds extra fancy or organic green zucchini*
- *Fine sea salt QB*
- *3 1/2 pounds littleneck clams, rinsed*
- *Red pepper flakes QB*
- *A couple tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley QB*
- *14 ounces linguine*

Lightly crush the garlic cloves put in a sauté pan large enough to hold clams.

Add the oil and heat over medium heat until the garlic starts to sizzle.

Adjust the heat so the garlic slowly cooks to release its essential oils but does not get too brown.

Add the zucchini and a few pinches of salt. You will have to adjust the heat higher so the zucchini does not cool the pan.

Cook while gently stirring from time to time until the zucchini is softened and starts to break.

Remove from the heat and let rest 2 hours.

Bring a gallon of water to a boil in a large pot, turn the heat to medium, add a tablespoon of salt, and put a lid on the pot.

Over a bowl strain the zucchini and reserve. Pour the oil back into the pan.

Heat the zucchini oil over medium heat until it starts to shimmer.

Carefully add the clams and cover with a lid.

Turn the heat to medium-high and cook the clams, gently shaking the pan from time to time until they start to open.



...taste it!

Add the zucchini, some red pepper flakes, and the parsley.

Gently combine and set aside.

Bring the pasta water to a boil and cook the linguine about 2 minutes less than the cooking time suggested on the package.

Reserve 1/2 cup pasta water before draining the pasta.

Toss the pasta with the clams over medium heat adding a little pasta water if necessary so the linguine is evenly coated with zucchini and oil.

Transfer the linguine first to a serving platter or individual bowls.

Place the clams, zucchini, and any remaining sauce in the pan on top.

Serve with red pepper flakes on the side.