

Penne Alla Vodka

Subtext

My wife loves this pasta dish, first discovering it on a trip to New Jersey.. Its a simple dish tomato sauce, infused with the flavor of vodka, pancetta, herbs and cheese.



1 pound	penne pasta	1 cup	vodka
2 tablespoons	extra virgin olive oil	2 cups	crushed tomatoes
4 ounces	chopped pancetta		
1 cup	thinly sliced white onion	1 cup	heavy cream
2 tablespoon	chopped fresh oregano		
2 cloves	finely chopped garlic	1/2 cup	grated pecorino
1/2 teaspoon	red-pepper flakes	1/4 cup	Italian parsley

1. Cook the pasta per directions on the box. Drain and reserve (without rinsing)
2. While the pasta is cooking heat the oil in a large skillet over medium low heat.
3. Add the pancetta to the skillet then cook until it's fat is slightly translucent and the meat is crisp, stirring every once in a while.
4. Add the onion, garlic, oregano and red-pepper then cook until onion is soft and translucent, stirring every once in a while. Turn the heat to medium-low, remove the pan from the flame and add the vodka then reduced by half.
5. Add the tomatoes to the skillet then simmer until the sauce begins to thicken, about 10 minutes, and season with salt and pepper. If you want a thinner sauce add a bit of water or chicken stock to the skillet prior to reducing.
6. Add the cream then cook the sauce gently until the sauce is a pale pink color, stirring every once in a while.
7. Add the cooked pasta, pecorino and parsley to the sauce then toss or mix to evenly coat the pasta.
8. Divide the pasta among plates and top with additional cheese, if desired.