

Eat The View



Recipes and Tips

Spicy Butternut Squash Pasta with Spinach

salt
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium butternut squash (about 2½ pounds), peeled, seeds removed and cut into ½-inch cubes (about 6 cups by volume)
1 tablespoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon red-pepper flakes, plus more as needed
16 oz penne or other tubular pasta
1 cup vegetable broth (or water)
¾ cup grated Parmesan
3 packed cups baby spinach (by volume)
1 (8-ounce) ball fresh mozzarella, torn into bite-size chunks (others have used cottage cheese)
1 jalapeño, sliced into rounds

In a 12-inch ovenproof skillet with high sides and a tight-fitting lid (or a Dutch oven), heat the oil over medium-high until shimmering. Add the squash and season with salt, cumin and red-pepper flakes. Cook, stirring every minute, until squash becomes browned in spots and feels just tender, 6 to 8 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat the oven to 200°C. Add the pasta to boiling water and cook, uncovered, until not quite al dente, 3 to 4 minutes less than the instructions. (It should be a little too firm to the bite.) Reserve 1 cup of the pasta water and drain. If the pasta is done before the squash, then stir in a drizzle of olive oil so that it doesn't stick together.

When the squash is just tender, add the broth. Bring to an active simmer, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the squash is soft and easily mashable, 10 to 12 minutes. Turn off the heat, then use a potato masher or the back of a wooden spoon to crush about half of the butternut squash and leave the rest chunky. Season the squash to taste, keeping in mind that salty Parmesan will be added soon.

Add the cooked pasta to the skillet along with 1 cup reserved pasta water and ½ cup grated Parmesan, stirring vigorously to combine. Stir in the spinach one handful at a time until it shrinks down a little.

Sprinkle the top with the remaining ¼ cup Parmesan, the mozzarella and jalapeño, then place in the oven, on a sheet pan if you are worried about dripping. Cook until the top is melted and browned in spots, 12 to 15 minutes.