

Tomato Confit Pasta Salad with Creamy Burrata

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 2 hours

Total time: 2 hours 20 minutes

Makes 8 to 12 servings

Tomato Garlic Confit

1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns

1 head of garlic, top cut off

3 to 6 dried chilies or 2 teaspoons red chili flakes, optional

17 to 24 oz (500 to 680 g) cherry tomatoes

Extra-virgin olive oil, enough to cover the tomatoes, about 400 to 500 g

Dressing

Confit garlic head, squeezed and finely chopped

2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh oregano

2 tablespoons finely chopped chives

1/3 cup chopped fresh basil, plus more for garnishing

2 garlic cloves, grated or minced

1/2 teaspoon Aleppo pepper or red chili flakes

1 tablespoon vinegar, such as rice vinegar, apple cider vinegar, etc.

3 to 6 Calabrian chilies, finely chopped

1/3 cup tomato confit oil

A splash of olive brine

Kosher salt

Pasta Salad

250 g short pasta, such as Radiatore, Casarecce, Orecchiette, Lumache, etc.

5.5 oz (155 g) jar Castelvetrano olives, sliced in half

1 x 14 oz (400 g) can quartered artichoke hearts, drained and rinsed

1 small red onion or 1/2 large red onion, finely chopped, about 1 cup

8-ounce (226 g) burrata

Kosher salt

Place an oven rack in the center of the oven. Heat the oven to 250°F (125°C).

Make the tomato garlic confit: In a medium baking dish, add the peppercorns, the garlic head, the chilies, the tomatoes and enough oil to cover the tomatoes all the way through.

It's going to be a lot of oil, but don't worry, you're not wasting it, we'll be using it later in the recipe. Place the baking dish in the oven and bake for 2 hours, the tomatoes will get jammy and tender while the oil slowly infuses with all the flavors. Set aside to cool.

Make the dressing: Squeeze out the garlic cloves on a cutting board. Finely chop them and add them to a small mixing bowl. Add the oregano, the chives, the basil, the grated garlic, the Aleppo pepper or chili flakes, the vinegar, the oil and whisk to combine. Add a splash of olive brine to loosen up the consistency and mix. Taste and season with salt as needed.

Cook the pasta: Bring a medium pot of water to a boil over medium heat. Season the water with a hefty pinch of salt and add the pasta. Cook the pasta, all the way through, according to the package instructions. Drain the water using a sieve or colander and add the pasta to a large mixing bowl.

Make the salad: To the pasta bowl, add the olives, the artichoke heart, the red onion, a handful or two of basil leaves (if using), and a hefty pinch of salt all over. Scoop the tomatoes out of the oil and add them to the bowl. Store the leftover tomato confit oil in a quart container or squeeze bottle in the fridge, and use it in salad dressings, in cooking, etc. Tear the burrata in half, and place it over the salad, allowing the inside to ooze out all over. Pour the dressing and toss to combine using a spoon or spatula. Break the burrata as you toss the salad into smaller pieces, and mix the inside of the burrata with the dressing. It'll create a rich, silky, creamy sauce to coat the pasta.

Serve the pasta right away or store in the fridge, up to 4 to 5 days.