

WHAT'S 4 DINNER?

#RECIPESTHATDISH



Sausage & Broccoli Pasta in Vodka Sauce

March 31, 2022

If a Shapeshifter were a meal, it could easily be this dish. You can make this vegan (using a meat substitute, coconut milk, and vegan parmesan), or with pork/turkey/chicken sausage, heavy cream, and parmigiano reggiano. For the vegetables, I usually go with oven-roasted broccoli, but have been known to just throw in some frozen peas in a pinch (still delicious!). If you feel like minimizing dishes, you can also just boil broccoli florets in the pasta cooking water for the last 3-5 minutes of pasta cooking time. I have made this pasta every way listed above, and I love it in all its forms!

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 1 pound vegan sausage (like Beyond Sausage) or pork Italian sausage, removed from casings
 - 2 small shallots, minced (equal to about 1/3 cup)
 - 4 cloves garlic, minced or grated
 - 1/2-1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, depending on desired spice level
 - 4-6 ounces tomato paste (either an entire tube or small can)
 - 1/4 cup vodka
 - 1 (13.5oz) can of coconut milk or 2 cups heavy cream
 - 1 pound short pasta
 - 1 large head broccoli cut into 1" bite-sized florets
 - 1/3 cup grated vegan parmesan or parmigiano reggiano cheese, plus for more serving
 - 1/4 cup torn Basil leaves or Chopped Parsley, for serving
- Kosher salt & Freshly ground black pepper
Olive oil

Method:

1. In a large pot, bring salted water to boil over medium-high heat. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Cut broccoli into 1" florets and toss with olive oil, salt and pepper. Spread evenly onto a sheet pan, and roast in the oven for 10-12 minutes, until broccoli is crisp tender and browned at the edges. Set aside.
2. In a dutch oven, heat 3 tablespoons of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add sausage, and cook, breaking it up into small pieces, until it has turned brown, about 8-10 minutes (If using pork sausage, cook until no pink remains, and outside has caramelized).
3. Add minced shallots, garlic, and red pepper flakes to taste. Reduce heat to medium and continue cooking, stirring frequently, until the shallots become translucent.
4. Move the sausage-vegetable mixture to the side of the pan and add tomato paste. Cook tomato paste by itself, stirring constantly, until it caramelizes and turns a brick/rust color, then incorporate the paste into sausage mixture.
5. Add the vodka and stir vigorously to scrape up any fond that has accumulated on the bottom of the pan. Once the vodka has almost completely cooked away, add coconut milk (or heavy cream) and stir until the sauce turns a pale coral color. Continue cooking over

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medium heat, stirring frequently, until the sauce thickens enough to leave a trail when you pull your spoon through it. Turn off heat, but keep sauce warm until the pasta is finished cooking.

6. Drop pasta into boiling, salted water and cook according to the minimum time listed on the package. Before draining pasta, remove 1 cup of starchy cooking water.
7. Add pasta directly to the pan with sauce, and stir to incorporate. Add ½ cup of pasta water and continue stirring until sauce loosens and becomes glossy (keep the rest of the pasta cooking water on hand in case it needs more later). Stir in grated parmesan and broccoli. Taste for seasoning—adding salt and pepper, if needed. Serve immediately topped with additional parmesan, basil or parsley, and a drizzle of olive oil for garnish.

*Notes

Since vegan sausage releases less fat while cooking, you may need to add more olive oil to brown it. I've found it also requires more stirring than animal-based products. If you use coconut milk instead of heavy cream, keep stirring frequently to avoid separation. I prefer the broccoli cooked separately from the pasta. In my opinion, when the broccoli is boiled in the pasta cooking water, everything takes on the broccoli flavor. However, doing so means fewer dishes and no heating the oven, so it's up to you!