

Pasta with Spiced Chicken

Category: Pasta

Servings: 4

Rating: 10

Source: Lucy Waverman - Globe and Mail

Description:

A wonderful Sicilian dish with a hint of Moroccan spice. Sauce is better if made early in the day with chicken and spinach added at serving time.

Needs a robust Italian red wine to match.

Ingredients:

olive oil	2 Tbsp.
chicken thighs	1 lb., boneless, skinless
salt	
black pepper	
leeks	1 cup, sliced
carrots	1/2 cup, finely chopped
celery	1/2 cup, finely chopped
garlic	1 Tbsp, chopped
red wine	1/2 cup
chicken stock	2 cups, low sodium or homemade
canned tomatoes	1 cup, chopped
cinnamon stick	1" piece
star anise	one whole star
fresh thyme	2 tsp., chopped
chili flakes	pinch
baby spinach	2 cups
orecchiete	12 oz., or may use medium shells or bow tie pasta
parmesan cheese	1 oz., shaved (optional)

Instructions:

Heat oil in a saute pan or large skillet on medium-high heat. Season thighs with salt and pepper. Add chicken thighs to pan and saute till brown on both sides, about 2 minutes per side. Remove from pan.

Add leeks, carrots and celery to pan and saute until softened slightly, about 3 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute. Pour in red wine and bring to boil. Boil until reduced by 1/2, about two minutes. Add chicken stock, tomatoes, cinnamon, anise, thyme and chili flakes. Bring to boil, reduce heat to low and simmer, covered for about 30 minutes. Remove cover and add chicken. Cover again and cook until chicken is cooked through, about 20 to 25 minutes. Remove cinnamon stick and star

anise. Remove chicken from pan and shred. If sauce is too thin, bring to a boil and cook until slightly thickened.

Return chicken to pan and add spinach. Cook for 1 minute longer or until spinach is wilted. Season with salt and pepper.

Cook the pasta and then drain it. If the sauce is too thick, use some of the pasta water to thin it. The dish is best if it is a little "sloppy". Toss the pasta with sauce, topping with shaved Parmesan.