Lemony Pasta with Vegetables

Makes 4 Servings

Prep Time: 10 min.   Cook Time: 20 mins   Total Time: about 30 min.

Ingredients

- 1/2 pound dry pasta – any shape you like.

- 3-4 cups of mixed fresh, frozen or canned vegetables of your choice

- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

- 1/4 cup lemon juice

- 1/3 cup grated parmesan cheese, plus more for sprinkling

- 1 teaspoon salt (optional)

- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

- 5-6 large sweet basil leaves, thinly sliced or 1 tablespoon dried basil

1. Cook the Vegetables: Follow directions on package if using frozen or canned; blanch (boil for about 3 minutes) or steam if using fresh. Set aside when finished cooking.

2. Cook the Pasta: Fill a large pot halfway with water. Add 1/2 teaspoon of salt (optional) Bring to a boil. Cook pasta according to the package directions. Drain the pasta, reserving 1/2 cup of the cooking water.

3. Make the Sauce: While the pasta is cooking, whisk the olive oil, lemon juice, parmesan, remaining salt and pepper in a small bowl. Blend well.

4. Put cooked pasta and vegetables into a large bowl. Add sauce and toss, mixing in small amounts of the reserved cooking water until the sauce just coats the pasta (sauce should not be liquidy.) Season with additional salt and pepper to taste. Just before serving, mix in the basil (fresh or dry). Sprinkle with extra parmesan cheese.

Based on a recipe by Panning The Globe (www.panningtheglobe.com)
OTHER USES FOR LEMON JUICE
(from Care2 www.care2.com/greenliving/22-surprising-uses-for-lemons.html)

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Substitute Lemon Juice for Salt. Reduce your salt intake with a sprinkle of lemon instead of salt to season your food.

Prevent Sticky Rice. Add 1 teaspoon of lemon juice to the pot while the rice is simmering.

Keep Food Fresh. A little lemon juice helps prevent cut fruits and vegetables (like apples, potatoes) from turning brown in the fridge.

Refresh Sad Lettuce. Before you throw out that soggy, wilted lettuce, try putting it in a bowl of cold water with a tablespoon of lemon to bring it back to life.

Add it to Your Hot or Cold Water. Just a little lemon makes plain water a lot tastier.

POSSIBLE HEALTH BENEFITS OF DRINKING LEMON WATER
(tips from www.healthline.com)

- It promotes hydration- It's important to stay hydrated, but lots of people don't like the taste of water. To make it more appealing, squirt a little lemon juice in it.
- It can improve your skin
- It may aid in weight loss
- Drinking warm lemon water in the morning can aid in digestion
- It may freshen your breath
- It possibly could help prevent kidney stones

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