

An evening of sophistication: Cacio e Pepe, bruschetta and sundowners

To eat:

Cacio e Pepe | Prep: <10mins Cooking: 20mins

- 2tsp black peppercorns
- 200g spaghetti
- 80g pecorino romano, at room temperature, finely grated

Instructions

Before you start, make sure your bruschetta mix is out of the fridge so it has time to come up to room temperature

1. Toast the peppercorns in a hot, dry pan until fragrant, then roughly crush in a pestle and mortar or blitz quickly in a spice grinder (make sure it's not too fine)
2. Bring a wide shallow pan (like a saute pan or frying pan) of well-salted water to the boil.
3. Add the spaghetti; it should be fully covered by the water but not by much. If there's too much water, take some out straight away before the pasta starts to cook.
4. Stir occasionally whilst cooking.

Whilst the spaghetti is cooking, you could turn the grill on for your bruschetta

1. After 5 minutes, take out 250ml of water and leave to cool slightly in a separate bowl.
2. Once the pasta had finished cooking (as per packet instructions), drain and leave it to cool for a minute
3. In a separate large bowl, add the cheese and most of the pepper. Whisk in a small amount of the reserved, slightly cooled pasta water to first make a paste. Continue adding pasta water gradually until you have a sauce the consistency of a béchamel.
4. Add the spaghetti and toss vigorously while continuing to gradually add pasta water (you shouldn't need it all) to make a sauce that evenly coats each strand.
5. This might take a little while, but keep mixing and it will come together.
6. Divide between two warmed bowls, sprinkle over the remaining black pepper and serve straight away.

Bruschetta | Prep: 15mins Cooking: 5mins (plus time for chilling)

- 1/2 small red onion, finely chopped
- 4 medium tomatoes (approx. 250g), roughly chopped and drained
- 1-2 garlic cloves, minced or finely chopped
- 3-4 fresh basil leaves, finely chopped
- 15ml balsamic vinegar
- 30-40ml extra virgin olive oil
- 2 ciabatta rolls

Instructions

1. In a large bowl, combine onion, tomatoes, garlic and basil, being careful to not break up the tomatoes too much.
2. Add the balsamic vinegar and olive oil and stir to combine
3. Add salt and pepper to taste
4. Cover and chill for an hour (or more if you're super organised) to allow the flavours to develop together. Remove from the fridge half an hour before serving to bring mixture back to room temperature.
5. When ready to serve, slice your ciabatta rolls horizontally, drizzle with a touch of olive oil and lightly toast until crisp and browned.
6. Serve the mixture on the warm slices of bread

To drink:

Sundowners | Prep: <5mins Cooking: <5mins

Negroni Sbagliato

- 25ml Campari
- 25ml Sweet Vermouth (such as Martini Rosso)
- 50ml Prosecco

Instructions

1. In a hi-ball glass, add Campari and sweet vermouth.

2. Fill with ice
3. Top with Prosecco (pour gently so it doesn't froth up over the edge!)
4. Give the drink a stir to mix
5. Garnish with an orange slice and enjoy!

Aperol Spritz

- 50ml Aperol
- 25ml Soda Water
- 75ml Prosecco

Instructions

1. Fill a wine glass with cubed ice
2. Add Aperol and soda water
3. Top with Prosecco
4. Give the drink a stir to mix
5. Garnish with a slice of grapefruit (or orange) and enjoy!

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