

Linguine With Roasted Garlic and Preserved Lemon

For the Pasta

1 large head of garlic
6 tablespoons, plus 1 teaspoon olive oil
2½ tablespoons unsalted butter
½-¾ of a preserved lemon
⅓ cup grated Parmigiano, plus more for serving
3 tablespoons chopped parsley
¼ teaspoon peperoncino
Black pepper to taste
½ cup fresh bread crumbs or panko
¾ pound of dry linguine

For the Preserved Lemons

11-12 lemons
1-2 tablespoons cardamom seeds
4-6 bay leaves
4 juniper berries
1 cup kosher salt

For the Preserved Lemons (if you decide to make rather than buy them)

Cut 6 of the lemons in quarters lengthwise, but leave them attached at one end.

Juice the remaining 5 or 6 lemons. You'll need more than a cup of juice.

Place 1 tablespoon of the salt in the bottom of a -quart jar. Rub the lemon quarters with salt. Whisk the remaining salt into the lemon juice until nearly dissolved.

Alternate placing the quartered lemons in the jar with some cardamom seeds, bay leaves, and lemon juice. When all ingredients have been placed in the jar, press down on the lemons to fit tightly, so they are covered with as much juice as possible. Tightly screw the lids on the jar.

Refrigerate the lemons for two to three weeks, shaking the jar vigorously every day. They will keep for months in the refrigerator.

For the Pasta

Preheat the oven to 400°. Cut the top third off the garlic and discard. Drizzle the cut side of the garlic with a teaspoon or more of olive oil. Wrap the garlic in foil and place it in an ovenproof bowl to catch any drippings. Roast the garlic in the oven for 50 minutes to an hour or more. Check after 50 minutes. The garlic should be very soft and golden brown. Remove the garlic, and let it cool enough to handle. Then squeeze the garlic pulp out of the skin. Mash it with a fork and set aside.

In a small skillet, heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat. Add the fresh breadcrumbs or panko, stirring constantly until the crumbs are nicely browned. Note that they will continue to cook a bit after removing them from the heat. Set aside.

Finely chop ½ to ¾ of one preserved lemon, depending on how lemony you want your sauce to be.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil, salting only lightly because the lemons will add saltiness to the dish. Cook the linguine just until *al dente*. When the pasta is nearly done, remove about ½ up of the starchy pasta water and set aside.

While the pasta is cooking, combine 2½ tablespoons of unsalted butter with 4 tablespoons of olive oil over medium-low heat. When the butter is melted, add the peperoncino, the mashed roasted garlic, and the chopped preserved lemon. Cook for a couple minutes and keep it warm.

Drain the pasta and immediately toss it with the grated Parmigiano, the garlic-lemon sauce, and the chopped parsley. Check the pasta for moistness. If it is dry, add a little of the preserved pasta water until you get a consistency you like. Season with black pepper.

Serve immediately in bowls. Top the pasta with the toasted breadcrumbs, and pass a bowl of extra Parmigiano.

Serves 2.