

CREMINI MUSHROOM PASTA WITH GOAT CHEESE AND ARUGULA

(adapted from The Essential New York Times Cookbook)

1 pound spaghetti (or another shape of your choice)
2 pounds cremini mushrooms, thinly sliced
2 Tbs olive oil
1 Tbs butter
1 clove garlic, minced
salt and black pepper to taste
2-3 cups baby arugula
3/4 pound soft goat cheese, crumbled (room temperature)
freshly minced parsley

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil, and cook the pasta until al dente. Heat the olive oil and butter on a non-stick skillet, add the garlic and saute for a couple of minutes. Add the sliced mushrooms, season lightly with salt and pepper. Cook the mushrooms until they release liquid and it almost completely evaporates. Reserve, keeping warm.

When the pasta is ready, reserve about 1/2 cup of the cooking water, drain the pasta, return to the pot and add the cremini mushrooms, arugula, goat cheese, and parsley. Toss everything gently to wilt the arugula, add some of the pasta water to get a smooth consistency, adjust seasoning, and serve.

(makes 4 substantial servings)