

ORZO WITH SHIITAKE MUSHROOMS AND SPINACH

(adapted from Fine Cooking magazine)

1 cup orzo
2 Tbs olive oil
1 shallot, finely diced
8 oz spinach leaves, stemmed, and coarsely chopped
4 oz fresh shiitake mushrooms, sliced
(or dried, reconstituted with hot water)
1/2 lemon, juice and zest
salt and pepper
grated parmiggiano-reggiano cheese (optional)



Start cooking the orzo on a large pot with salted water (it should take around 9 minutes). Heat the olive oil on a large skillet and saute the shallots, lightly seasoned with salt and pepper. Add the sliced shiitake mushrooms, saute until they start to get golden brown. Add the chopped spinach, cook until it begins to wilt. At this point, if the orzo is not cooked yet, turn the heat off and reserve.

When the orzo is almost cooked, remove 1/4 cup of the cooking water and reserve it. Turn the heat back to medium on the skillet with the spinach mix, squirt lemon juice and zest, season with salt and pepper. Drain the orzo and add it to the skillet, mixing well. Add some of the pasta water if necessary. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. If desired, sprinkle grated parmiggiano-reggiano on top.