

BUCATINI WITH SICILIAN PESTO

Bucatini al pesto siciliano

Classic pesto is a specialty of Liguria, in northwestern Italy. However, Sicilians have their own equally delicious, lesser-known version – just a few additional ingredients take it in an entirely new and exciting direction. In this recipe I've used bucatini pasta, which is basically a thicker version of spaghetti with a hole all the way through, but of course pasta of any shape will be fine.

Serves 4

350g fresh ripe tomatoes

75g blanched almonds

25g raisins

20g capers, drained

2 garlic cloves, peeled

2 fresh, medium-hot red chillies, deseeded

30g fresh basil leaves

20g fresh flat-leaf parsley

80ml extra virgin olive oil

Juice of ½ lemon

75g freshly grated Parmesan cheese, plus extra
for sprinkling

500g dried bucatini

Salt

1. Blitz the tomatoes in a blender or food processor and tip into a sieve set over the sink to drain.

2. Return the tomatoes to the blender and add the almonds, raisins, capers, garlic, chillies, basil, parsley, oil and lemon juice. Blitz until smooth and pour into a medium bowl. Stir in the Parmesan and season with salt.

3. Meanwhile, cook the bucatini in a large pan of boiling, salted water until al dente. Reserve 80ml of the cooking water. Drain the pasta thoroughly and tip it back into the same pan with the cooking water.

4. Pour over the pesto and stir for 30 seconds to combine. Serve immediately with a little Parmesan sprinkled over the top.

