



A Favorite from Northern Italy

Creamy Ricotta Rotini Pasta

Fresh garden herbs make a great pasta sauce

- 6 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1/4 cup fresh oregano leaves, chopped
- 4 Tablespoons broken walnuts, divided
- 1/8 teaspoon ground red pepper; granulated sugar
- 1 cup coarse chopped parsley leaves
- 1 teaspoon fresh grated orange peel
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup whole milk ricotta cheese
- Salt and ground black pepper to taste
- 8 ounces organic 100 % whole wheat rotini pasta, cooked al dente
- 1/2 cup chopped sweet/sour red peppers
- 1/2 cup pitted kalamata black olives

3 Tablespoons chopped fresh chives
1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Prepare Oregano Oil: In microwave safe bowl, stir together oil and oregano leaves to coat. Cook in microwave high power for 30 seconds; stir; continue cooking for 15 more seconds. Do not overcook. Set aside to cool.

Toast Walnuts: In small skillet, toss 4 Tablespoons broken walnuts with ground red pepper and granulated sugar. Cook on medium heat, stirring until walnuts are toasted. Remove; set aside.

In food processor, process oregano mixture and parsley until finely chopped. process in orange peel, 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese, and 2 Tablespoons toasted walnuts until well mixed pesto mixture forms. Place in large bowl; stir in ricotta cheese, salt, and black pepper until combined.

Cook pasta al dente according to package directions; drain pasta saving the pasta water.

Add the pasta to the ricotta mixture; toss to coat. Add desired reserved pasta water as needed to create a creamy sauce. Toss with chopped red peppers, black olives, fresh chives, remaining walnuts, and shredded Parmesan cheese. Garnish with fresh oregano sprig or chives. Serves 4

About the Recipe: Fresh garden herbs flavor a pesto that combines with ricotta cheese to create a creamy sauce for the rotini. The spirals in the corkscrew pasta shape lock in the dressing and flavor. Add sweet/sour red peppers, black olives, chives, and crunchy seasoned walnuts for a delightful light summer meal.