

Spinach Pasta with Za'atar, Lemon, and Parsley

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 pound spaghetti (or other long, thin pasta)
- Kosher salt
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 5 to 6 large garlic cloves, minced
- 12 ounces baby spinach
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 3 to 4 tablespoons za'atar, divided
- 1/2 cup to 1 cup grated parmesan cheese, plus more for garnish
- 1 lemon, zested and juiced
- 1 cup chopped fresh parsley

Instructions:

1. Cook the pasta. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and season well with kosher salt. Add the pasta and cook according to al dente according to package instructions (about 8 to 9 minutes). Reserve 2 cups of pasta water, then drain.
2. Soften the garlic. In a large pan, warm the olive oil over medium heat. When the oil shimmers, add the garlic and stir until fragrant, about 1 minute (you want some color but do not burn the garlic).
3. Wilt the spinach. Add the lemon juice and a splash of the pasta cooking water (about 1/2 cup). Begin adding in the spinach in batches, stirring until wilted and seasoning with a pinch of salt as you go. When all of the spinach is fully wilted, about 5 minutes, stir in the crushed red pepper flakes and 1 tablespoon of za'atar.
4. Combine the pasta and sauce. Add the pasta to the pan of spinach and toss everything to combine. Add the remaining za'atar, parmesan, lemon zest, and parsley. Toss until everything is well-combined. If the pasta looks a bit dry, add a little more olive oil or a splash more of the pasta cooking water and stir until it's glossy.
5. Serve. Serve with more cheese and za'atar on the side (I know I always add more of both to my bowl).

Sheet Pan Za'atar Chicken with Veggies

INGREDIENTS:

For the Za'atar-Garlic Sauce

- 2 tablespoons za'atar, plus more for serving
- 2 teaspoons sumac
- 1 teaspoon sweet paprika
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 lemons, juiced
- Extra virgin olive oil (about 1/2 cup)

For the Chicken and Veggies

- 5 Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and cut into large pieces (about 2-inches)
- 5 carrots, peeled and cut into large pieces (about 2-inches)
- 1 large red onion, peeled, halved and sliced into thick half moons (about 1-inch)
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 8 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs and drumsticks
- 1/3 cup blanched almonds (optional)
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley, for garnish

Instructions:

1. Get ready. Position a rack in the middle of the oven and heat to 425°F.
2. Make the Za'atar-Garlic Sauce. In a small bowl, whisk together the za'atar, sumac, paprika, garlic, lemon juice and enough olive oil to coat the chicken (1/2 cup or so).
3. Prep the veggies. Arrange the potatoes, carrots and onions on a large sheet pan and season with a big pinch of salt and pepper. Drizzle 3 to 4 tablespoons of the za'atar-garlic sauce over the vegetables and mix well with your hands so they're well coated. Spread the vegetables on the sheet pan without overlapping.
4. Flavor the chicken. Pat the chicken dry and loosen the skins a bit by gently sliding beneath the skin with your finger, separating the skin from the meat (you can use gloves). Season generously with salt and pepper on both sides and underneath the skins (very important). Now season underneath the skins again with the remainder of the Za'atar-Garlic Sauce.
5. Roast the chicken. Nestle the chicken into the vegetables. If you have any of the za'atar-garlic sauce left, drizzle it over top. Cover with foil and bake on the center rack of your heated oven for about 25 minutes, then carefully discard the foil and return to the oven for another 30 minutes, or until the chicken is fully cooked through and the skins have begun to brown and crisp in many parts.
6. In the final 5 minutes, toast the almonds (optional). If you're serving with the almonds, toss them with a drizzle of olive oil, sprinkle over the almost-cooked chicken, and bake until they're almonds lightly toasted, about 5 minutes.
7. Serve. Remove from the oven and allow the chicken to rest for 5 to 10 minutes. Sprinkle with the parsley and a pinch more za'atar and serve.

Olive and Za'atar Focaccia

INGREDIENTS:

- 450 grams lukewarm water , 2 cups
- 5 grams active dry yeast , 1 tsp
- 10 grams honey , 1/2 tbsp
- 465 grams unbleached all purpose flour , 3 3/4 cups + 2 tbsp , (I used King Arthur brand with 11.7% protein content)
- 10 grams kosher salt , 2 1/2 tsp , (I used Diamond Crystal Kosher)
- 80 grams olive oil , 1/2 cup , divided
- unsalted butter , for buttering the pan
- 1 cup pitted Castelvetrano olives
- 1 tbsp za'atar
- flakey sea salt

Instructions:

1. Whisk water, yeast, and honey in a medium bowl or measuring cup and let sit for 5 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, mix the flour and salt.
3. Add the yeast mixture to the flour mixture and mix with rubber spatula until a shaggy, wet dough forms, taking care that there are no dry, flour patches.
4. In a separate large bowl, add 1/4 cup (4 tbsp) of olive oil and oil the sides of the bowl with your fingers.
5. Transfer the dough into the bowl. With a little olive oil on your hands, quickly flip the dough over.
6. Cover the bowl very well with plastic wrap and place in the fridge for AT LEAST 12 hours. This can actually sit in the fridge for up to 2 days to develop the flavor.
7. Butter a 10" round cake pan. Drizzle in 2 tbsp of olive oil.
8. Transfer the dough into the prepared cake pan pouring any extra oil left in the bowl onto the top of the dough.
9. Let rise, uncovered, in a dry, warm spot until doubled in size and relaxed. This can take anywhere from 1 hour to 3 hours.
10. Place rack at the bottom of the oven and pre-heat to 450°F
11. Drizzle the dough with remaining 2 tbsp of olive oil.
12. Lightly oil your fingers, dimple the focaccia all over as if you're playing the piano. Don't be afraid to be aggressive. My fingertips touch the bottom of the pan when I do this.
13. Add the olives all around the dough by pressing some deep inside and leaving some closer to the top.
14. Sprinkle with za'atar and flakey sea salt.
15. Bake, on the bottom rack of the oven, until the focaccia is golden brown and puffy, about 30 minutes.
16. Allow to cool slightly, about 5 minutes, and remove the focaccia onto a wire rack to finish cooling. Enjoy!