

Pasta with Caramelized Onions and Stinging Nettles

(Adapted from Dorie Greenspan, Around My French Table, 2010)

I've been making this pasta on and off for two months now, and I'm still not tired of it. I use my own home-cured turkey bacon, but you can use regular bacon, or leave the meat out entirely. I like the smoke the bacon brings to the dish, but it is good without it too. I blanch my nettles in boiling salted water, drain, roll them in a towel, and chop them up while the onions are caramelizing.

3 tablespoons butter
4 large onions, roughly chopped
12 ounces of pasta
1 teaspoon olive oil
4 strips of turkey bacon – roughly 2 ounces, chopped
8 cups stinging nettles (8 cups before you blanch and drain the nettles), chopped
½ cup cream
1 egg yolk
Salt red pepper flakes and freshly ground pepper
Parmesan, to grate at the table

Melt the butter over medium high heat – be careful not to let it burn! Add the onions and stir, coating them in butter. Turn the heat down to low, cover the pot, and let the onions caramelize slowly, stirring occasionally till they are a rich brown color. This takes about a half an hour.

Bring a pot of water to boil for your pasta. Cook and drain.

Add the olive oil to the onions and turn the flame up to medium, add the bacon and the chopped nettles, sautéing until the bacon is crisp.

Beat the cream and the egg yolk together, and then add to the onion mixture. Stir to combine and then add the cooked pasta. Turn off the heat. Stir until the pasta is completely coated with the sauce. Add the salt and peppers and cover the pot and let the dish sit for 10 minutes.

Serve the pasta in bowls with fresh grated Parmesan.