

Green Angel Hair with Garlic Butter

From Smitten Kitchen Keepers by Deb Perelman

Ingredients:

1/2 cup butter, sliced into a few pieces
kosher salt
1 large head garlic, halved crosswise
1 lb thin spaghetti
5 oz baby spinach
freshly ground black pepper and/or red pepper flakes
pecorino romano, to finish

Directions:

Heat the oven to 375.

Arrange the butter slices across the bottom of a small baking dish. Sprinkle with salt. Place the garlic halves, cut side down, over the butter and salt. Cover the dish tightly with foil and bake for 35-45 minutes, until the garlic is soft and golden brown on the cut side. Remove the foil and empty the garlic cloves into the melted butter. Tongs work well here.

Meanwhile, cook your pasta in well-salted water until 1-2 minutes shy of done. Before you drain it, ladle 1 cup pasta water into a cup, and set it aside.

Place the spinach in a blender or food-processor bowl and pour the garlic butter over it. Add another pinch of salt and several grinds of black pepper, and/or a pinch of red pepper flakes. Blend the mixture until totally smooth. If it's not blending, add 1-2 tbsp of the pasta water to help it along. Taste for seasoning and add more if needed.

Pour the spinach sauce into the empty spaghetti pot, and add the drained pasta and a splash of pasta water. Cook over medium-high heat, tossing constantly, for 2 minutes, until the sauce thickens and coats the spaghetti. If the pasta is sticking, add more reserved pasta water in splashes to get it moving. Tip the pasta into a serving bowl, finish with more salt and pepper, and freshly grated cheese.