

Garlicky Whole Grain Spaghetti Squash Pasta from *Urban Sacred Garden*



I love spaghetti squash but, like most people I hear complaints from, it doesn't fully substitute as a pasta for me. There is a heartiness and texture to noodles I crave when I want pasta. Recently, I decided to combine spaghetti squash with whole grain spaghetti and the results were deliciously fantastic. Add a little garlicky spinach and it is perfection. I still receive all the same healthy eating benefits while satisfying my texture needs, too.

Yield: About 6 Servings

INGREDIENTS:

1 Spaghetti Squash, cut in half and de-seeded
5 oz. Multigrain Spaghetti, broken in 1/2 (I use Barilla)
3 Cloves Garlic, chopped
4 Cups Fresh Baby Spinach

Juice from 1 Lemon
Fresh Ground Sea Salt
Fresh Ground Pepper
1 Cup grated Parmesan, plus some for garnish*
1/4 Cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
Fresh Ground Red Pepper Flake

* I used shredded Parmesan for the garnish and grated for the dish. Shredded Parmesan will become very lumpy and stringy in the main dish, so be sure to use grated if possible.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cut Spaghetti squash in 1/2 long ways, scrape all seeds out with a spoon. (Save seeds for Roasted Squash Seeds if you'd like.) Cover a cookie sheet with aluminum foil. Place the squash on the covered pan, face (inside flesh side) down. Bake in the pre-heated oven for about 45 minutes until squash skin is semi firm when punctured with a fork and insides of squash are steamed to a soft, stringy pulp. Remove squash from oven and set aside to cool a little.
2. During last 15 minutes of squash cooking prepare Pasta and Spinach.
3. For Pasta, in a medium pan boil salted water (enough to adequately cover the pasta). Once water comes to a boil add Whole Grain Spaghetti (broken in 1/2) to water. Boil for about 8 minutes until al dente. Strain in a colander. Retain about 1-2 Tablespoons of pasta water.
4. For Spinach, heat a couple Tablespoons of the Olive Oil, some Sea Salt and Pepper in a very large non-stick skillet. Add Garlic to the pan and cook for about 1-2 minutes to release aroma and cook lightly. Add Spinach and toss, adding more Olive Oil as needed to keep Spinach from scorching or drying out. Just barely wilt Spinach then add Pasta, retained Pasta Water, fresh Lemon Juice, 1 Cup Parmesan Cheese, remaining Olive Oil, Fresh Ground Red Pepper, Sea Salt and Black Pepper to taste.
5. Pick up spaghetti squash with an oven mitt (if still too hot to handle). Take a fork or spoon and scrape out insides of squash into skillet, adding it to Spinach and Pasta. Thoroughly scrape out both spaghetti squash halves into pan. Toss skins in garbage.
6. Combine all ingredients in the skillet. Add more Olive Oil, Sea Salt, Red Pepper and Black Pepper as needed for flavor. As always, don't be afraid of the salt, it is a necessary flavoring agent and saves food from being bland.
7. Once combined and flavored to desired taste, serve warm by itself with a little cheese and red pepper sprinkle, or with Cheesy Bison Quinoa Meatballs. Serve with your favorite salad and hearty, crusty bread. Enjoy!