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Dining & Wine: Recipes

Pasta With Slow-Cooked Portobello Mushrooms

By [MARK BITTMAN](#)

TOTAL TIME About 1 hour

INGREDIENTS

8 ounces portobello mushrooms

3 cloves garlic

2 or 3 thyme sprigs

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

1/4 cup dried porcini mushrooms, optional

3 cups tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped (canned are fine)

1 pound penne or other cut pasta

Freshly grated Parmesan cheese

PREPARATION

1. Trim hard parts from mushrooms and discard. Rinse mushrooms quickly to remove grit; cut caps into slices and stems into small chunks. Combine in a medium skillet with 1 clove garlic (crushed and peeled), thyme, olive oil and some salt and pepper. Cook over sufficiently low heat so that mixture bubbles but mushrooms do not brown. Continue to cook, stirring infrequently, until they are quite shrunken in size and appear firm, 30 to 45 minutes. (At this point, you can pause for several hours before resuming cooking.) If you are using porcini, soak them in hot water to cover for a few minutes so that they soften.
2. Set a large pot of water to boil for pasta and salt it. Mince remaining garlic. Turn heat under oil to medium, and add garlic to the portobellos along with the drained porcini. Cook, stirring occasionally, until garlic begins to color. Add tomatoes and raise heat to medium high. Cook, stirring occasionally, until they break up and become saucy, about 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, cook pasta until it is tender but not mushy. Taste sauce and adjust its seasoning. When pasta is done, drain it, toss with sauce, top with Parmesan, and serve.

YIELD 4 servings

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