

# Summer Pasta With Zucchini, Ricotta and Basil

(/recipes/1017463-summer-pasta-with-zucchini-ricotta-and-basil)

By David Tanis | Time: 30 minutes | Yield: 4 to 6 servings

## Ingredients

### Extra-virgin olive oil

**1 small onion, finely diced**

**2 pounds zucchini, sliced into 1/4-inch-thick pieces (for larger zucchini, cut in half lengthwise before slicing)**

### Salt and pepper

**2 garlic cloves, minced, or 2 tablespoons chopped green garlic**

**1 ounce basil, about 2 cups loose leaves**

**1 pound ziti or other dry pasta**

**8 ounces ricotta, about 1 cup (see recipe**

**(<http://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1015560-fresh-ricotta>))**

**Pinch of crushed red pepper**

**Zest of 1 lemon**

**2 ounces grated Parmesan, pecorino or a mixture, about 1 cup, plus more for serving**

## Preparation

### Step 1

Put a pot of water on to boil. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, cook the onions in 3 tablespoons olive oil until softened, 5 to 8 minutes. Reduce heat as necessary to keep onions from browning. Add zucchini, season generously with salt and pepper, and continue cooking, stirring occasionally until rather soft, about 10 minutes. Turn off heat.

### Step 2

Meanwhile, use a mortar and pestle to pound garlic, basil and a little salt into a rough paste (or use a mini food processor). Stir in 3 tablespoons olive oil.

### Step 3

Salt the pasta water well and put in the pasta, stirring. Boil per package instructions but make sure to keep pasta quite al dente. Drain pasta, reserving 1 cup of cooking water.

### Step 4

Add cooked pasta to zucchini in skillet and turn heat to medium-high. Add 1/2 cup cooking water, then the ricotta, crushed red pepper and lemon zest, stirring to distribute. Check seasoning and adjust. Cook for 1 minute more. Mixture should look creamy. Add a little more pasta water if necessary. Add the basil paste and half the grated cheese and quickly stir to incorporate. Spoon pasta into warm soup plates and sprinkle with additional cheese. Serve immediately.

## Nutritional Information

### Nutritional analysis per serving (4 servings)

694 calories; 20 grams fat; 8 grams saturated fat; 8 grams monounsaturated fat; 1 gram polyunsaturated fat; 99 grams carbohydrates; 7 grams dietary fiber; 10 grams sugars; 29 grams protein; 38 milligrams cholesterol; 272 milligrams sodium

**Note:** Nutrient information is not available for all ingredients. Amount is based on available data.

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## Tip

*This creamy herbal pasta dish calls for a lively white with citrus and herbal flavors. Dry southern Italian whites like falanghina and fiano from Campania should go very well, as will various Sicilian whites from indigenous grapes like carricante, grillo and zibibbo. You could roam through various other Italian whites like good Soaves from the Veneto, vernaccias from Tuscany and ribolla giallas from Friuli-Venezia Giulia. Or you could stray into France. Sancerres and other sauvignon blancs from the Loire will be delicious, as will the delightfully dry whites from southwestern appellations like Irouléguy and Jurançon. Good dry arariños from Spain and grüner veltliners from Austria will not disappoint, nor will lively Vinho Verdes from Portugal and Txakolinas from the Spanish Basque region. Lean dry rosés will also go very well. For a departure, how about a Belgian wheat beer? ERIC ASIMOV*

