

Mussels Marinara in Red Sauce
(Zuppa di Mussels)
From the website "Mangia with Michele"

Prep: 15 minutes
Cook: 15 minutes
Total: 30 minutes
Servings: 2

Ingredients

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
2 Tbsp chopped or thinly sliced garlic, (use more or less, as desired)
3-4 anchovy filets
Pinch crushed red pepper
½ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves,, divided
1 cup dry white wine, such as pinot grigio
1 (28-ounce) can whole tomatoes,, crushed by hand (See Notes.)
Pinch salt and black pepper
2 pounds black mussels,, cleaned (See Notes for details.)

Preparation

1. Prep and gather all ingredients according to specifications above. Then, clean the mussels: Inspect each mussel, remove any obvious surface debris with your hands or a potato brush, and pull out any "beards" (small hairy mass) that you see between the shells. (Use a paper towel or cloth if necessary to grab hold of the beard.) Discard any mussels that are cracked or don't close when tapped. Rinse them under cold water. (See **Notes** below for additional mussel info.)
2. Combine the olive oil, garlic, anchovies and crushed red pepper in a large skillet over medium low heat and cook until the garlic starts to soften and brown and the anchovies have dissolved, about 4 to 5 minutes. Add half the chopped parsley after two minutes. Stir occasionally.
3. Pour the wine in the pan and scrape up any brown bits. Then, add the tomatoes, salt and black pepper and stir until well-combined. (Note that the mussels will add additional saltiness to the dish.)
4. Bring the tomato mixture to a simmer and simmer, uncovered for about 10 minutes or so to reduce and thicken the sauce and allow the alcohol taste to cook off.
5. Then, carefully add the cleaned mussels to the simmering tomato sauce. Stir gently and distribute them evenly across the surface of the pan. Cover, lower the heat to medium low and let them steam, shaking the pan and gently stirring a few times as they cook.
6. The mussels are cooked once they open! Transfer mussels to a bowl one-by-one as they are cooked/opened, and replace the cover as the remaining cook. Discard any mussels that did not open. It may take around 10 minutes for all the mussels to cook.
7. Once all the mussels have cooked, either return all the mussels back to the pan, gently stirring a few times to disperse the tomato sauce throughout, or transfer the mussels to a serving bowl, pouring the tomato sauce over them.
8. Sprinkle with remaining chopped parsley and serve immediately with some crusty bread to sop up all the wonderful sauce and juices! As mussels are a fun interactive

meal, consider serving them family-style right in the pot or pan in which they were cooked. Don't forget to serve with a small bowl for discarded shells. Buon Appetito!

Notes

- Almost all mussels sold commercially are cultivated and, therefore, much easier to clean than wild-harvested ones. They usually come already debearded and just need a few good rinses in cold water. Occasionally you'll find one that needs to be debearded. (The "beard" is a clump of fibers attached to the mussel shell and looks like a little rope hanging off.) Simply grasp the "beard" with your fingers or a paper towel and yank downwards towards the hinge of the shell. The "beard" should come off easily. If not, just snip it off with kitchen scissors.
- It's best to use mussels or any live shellfish on the same day that you purchase them. However, if you are not cooking them immediately once purchased, the best way to store them (for one day only) is on a bed of ice (with some ice on top as well) in a colander inside a bowl, uncovered. (See photo above for reference.) When ready to use, take them out of the refrigerator and clean them. You can return them to the refrigerator after cleaning without any ice while the tomato sauce is cooking.
- I generally prefer to use whole canned tomatoes and then hand crush them as they are less processed than other types. However, you can also use diced tomatoes or even crushed (if you prefer a smoother sauce) in this recipe.
- Also, choose a high-quality canned tomato, such as a San Marzano tomato, for this recipe. As there are so few ingredients, their quality really matters.
- A prepared marinara sauce can also be used in this recipe.
- Try not to have any leftovers! Seriously though, mussels marinara is really best enjoyed fresh. If you do have leftovers, reheat them in a small covered skillet with their sauce (or a bit of water if there is no sauce left) over low heat. Do not microwave these leftovers