

Pasta Alla Vodka
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Yield: 4 to 6 Servings
Time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

Kosher salt
1 pound rigatoni or penne pasta
2 tablespoons olive oil
4 ounces diced pancetta, optional
1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
½ teaspoon red-pepper flakes
¾ cup vodka
1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
Freshly ground black pepper
¾ cup heavy cream
¼ cup grated Grana Padano or Parmesan cheese, plus more for serving
1 tablespoon roughly chopped fresh oregano
2 tablespoons roughly chopped Italian parsley

PREPARATION

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil (2 heaping tablespoons kosher salt to about 7 quarts water). Add the pasta and cook according to package instructions until al dente.
2. Meanwhile, prepare the sauce: Heat the oil in a deep 12-inch skillet or pot over medium. Add the pancetta, if using, and fry until crispy, stirring occasionally, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the onion, garlic and red-pepper flakes and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is translucent, about 3 minutes. Turn the heat to medium-low, add the vodka and cook until reduced by half, 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Stir in the tomatoes and then fill the can halfway with water and swish it around to loosen up any leftover tomatoes; add a quarter to half of the water to the pan. Simmer until the sauce begins to thicken, about 10 minutes, and season with salt and pepper. If you prefer your sauce a little looser, go ahead and add the remaining water and simmer 2 to 3 minutes more. Reduce heat to low, add the cream and cook, stirring, until the sauce becomes an even pinkish-rust color, about 1 minute.
4. Stir in the cooked pasta and ¼ cup cheese; toss to coat. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Divide among bowls, top with additional cheese, if desired, and sprinkle with the oregano and parsley.