

Pasta With Brown Butter, Whole Lemon, and Parmesan

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Blurb

A weeknight pasta that utilizes simple pantry ingredients in a luxurious way. A sliced whole lemon gives unbeatably fresh aroma from the skin, bitter complexity from the pith, and tart, puckery juice from the flesh. Thin slices soften evenly and ensure that the lemon plays nicely with the pasta, brown butter, and Parmesan.

Ingredients

- 1 lb. short tube pasta (such as paccheri or rigatoni)
- Kosher salt
- 8 Tbsp. (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into pieces, divided
- 1 small regular lemon or Meyer lemon, very thinly sliced into rounds, seeds removed
- 1 oz. Parmesan, finely grated, plus more for serving
- Freshly ground black pepper

Instructions

1. Cook pasta in a large pot of boiling generously salted water, stirring occasionally, until very al dente, about 2 minutes less than package directions (pasta will finish cooking in the sauce).
2. Meanwhile, heat half of the butter in a large Dutch oven or other heavy pot over medium until melted. Add lemon slices and cook, stirring often, until softened and bottom of pot is browned in spots, 5-7 minutes. Using tongs, transfer one-third of lemon slices to a plate; set aside.

3. Just before pasta is al dente, scoop out 2 cups pasta cooking liquid. Add 1.5 cups pasta cooking liquid to butter sauce. (This may seem like a lot of liquid, but it will thicken once the remaining ingredients are added.) Add remaining butter a piece at a time, whisking until each piece is incorporated before adding more, until the sauce is emulsified and creamy.
4. Drain pasta and add to sauce. Cook, stirring often and adding 1 oz. Parmesan a little at a time. Once all of the cheese is added, continue to cook, still stirring, until cheese is melted and sauce is creamy and clings to pasta, about 3 minutes. If sauce looks very thick, add more pasta cooking liquid 1-2 Tbsp. at a time to thin (saucier is ideal as it will thicken as it cools). Remove from heat and sprinkle with an almost ridiculous amount of pepper (about 2 tsp.); toss once more.
5. Serve pasta topped with reserved lemon rounds and more Parmesan.

End-blurb

Comments

- Deserving of all 5 stars. Absolutely! Delicious! I even went back for a 3rd helping. So lemony - cheesy - and peppery! What intrigued me about this dish was sauteing the entire lemon... I've never heard of that. I tweaked the recipe by adding red pepper flakes to the lemon butter sauce ... might as well add some heat if you are going to douse it with copious amounts of pepper...then at the end I added fresh parsley and basil from my herb garden. Wooza...it was fantastic. My husband and I entertain a lot and we will judge a new recipe based on if it's company worthy. It is! I used regular lemon since my grocery store didn't offer a Meyer's lemon. For the people who said it was bitter - please try again - you might have had a bad lemon. It's worth the extra effort of one more time.
- Loved this dish! I used rigatoni since that was all that was available, but it worked perfectly. I didn't blanch the lemon like others recommended, I just sliced it super thinly (like 3-5mm) and made sure to remove all the seeds. I also removed the softened lemon slices about a minute before the butter had browned. Everything turned out great, and I loved the zing of the lemon and the sharp flavor from the black pepper paired with the buttery, salty sauce. 10/10 recommend
- Meh. It was fine. Not awful. But not really worth the effort at all. Didn't give me more nuance than I would have gotten from simple buttered pasta topped with Parmesan.
- operator error, i'm sure. but where/how/why, i'm not sure. i essentially had soup made out of a stick of butter, thinly sliced lemon, and too much (but the called-for amount) of the pasta water. hoping against logic, i added the parm-maybe IT would thicken it up? nope. wth, i dumped the pasta in & slurped it up anyway. the flavors were heavenly, how could they not be? butter, chz, and lemon! but i truly would've liked a successful execution of the recipe-i'm a pretty good cook. ah, ya can't always get it right!
- Made this last night for a special Sunday Dinner and it was D-lish! I modified the recipe just a tad by using Lobster Ravioli and adding garlic shrimp to the final product, I used

Meyer Lemons, removed ALL seeds, Kerrygold Butter for the best butter flavor and squeezed an additional reg lemon into the sauce just prior to serving, garnished with chives. Zero bitterness, just sublime savory lemon buttery sauce which we both loved and would serve to company which is our barometer, would we serve this to company? A very hearty yes sir on this one. Served w/grilled garlic bread on side to wipe out the bowl because it was that tasty. Wish this review system allowed me to post my finished product pics of the dish with my mods. We really loved it and encourage you to try it too.

- I've made this a few times and love it. I use regular lemons and because we both love lemon, I use a whole lemon for the 2 of us. So simple and delicious.
- Really tasty! After reading the reviews, I wasn't sure what to expect. I used a regular lemon and added a little honey when I caramelized the lemons. I probably didn't cook enough pasta because I had a lot of sauce. However, that worked well with my dinner of steamed broccoli and baked salmon (with lemon). We were able to add some sauce on the broccoli and salmon. My husband liked it too, so I'll make it again
- I you, like me, can't decide between the Meyer lemon and the regular lemon based on the discussion in the reviews, I went with a Meyer lemon and even though I didn't follow the recipe to the "T", I really enjoyed the dish. If you're on the fence about whether to make this dish or not, I would say don't. It's just pasta in a lemony-cheesy-peppery sauce, very delicious but not worth all the discussion in the comment section.
- This was a nice surprise and I really enjoyed the flavors. Added some toasted hazelnuts for my second serving which added a nice additional texture. I think I will also try some fresh parsley
- This was really quick and easy for a lazy weeknight meal. I only used half a box of pasta but wish I had used the entire lemon and stick of butter, the sauce turned out so delicious. Don't worry about finding a Meyer lemon! Those who found this to be bitter, I urge you to retry and make sure to remove every single lemon seed. Will make many times over!
- Hi! I have a bunch of lemon that have been zested, can i use them for this recipe? Thanks!
- Echoing Jill from Ontario! This was not at all what I expected. Really bitter and not creamy at all.
- this recipe was suuuuper bitter. i used normal lemon which i think was the problem, if you make this i would recommend either using a meyer lemon, or if you use regular, maybe add some sugar when caramelizing ?
- PEFECT marriage of flavors
- Didn't turn out great. Next time I'll play with the timing of the butter browning and adding the lemon to see if I can alter the flavor a bit. Overall, a tangy (and sadly bitter) version of a cacio e pepe.

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