

Portuguese Razor Clam Rigatoni

Inspired by the Portuguese-style clam chowder popular at Cape Verdean spots on Cape Cod, this hearty pasta dish, made with spicy sausage, kale, garlic, and a touch of cream, makes a great home for chopped razor clams. If linguica or razor clams aren't available in your area, substitute any spicy sausage or regular chopped clams, respectively.

TIME: 45 minutes total

MAKES: 4 hearty servings

3 teaspoons olive oil, divided
4 spicy sausages (such as linguica, chorizo, or hot Italian), casings removed
1 large leek, halved lengthwise and sliced into 1/4" half-moons
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
1 (1/2 pound) bunch kale, stems removed and chopped
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1 cup dry white wine
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
1 pound razor clam meat, chopped
3/4 pound bite-sized pasta, such as rigatoni
1/4 cup heavy cream
Grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

Put a big pot of water on to boil for the pasta.

Heat a large, heavy skillet over medium heat. When hot, add 2 teaspoons of the olive oil, and swirl to coat. Add the sausage, crumbling it into bite-sized pieces as you add it to the pan, and cook, breaking it up as you go and turning occasionally, until no pink remains. Transfer the sausage to a paper towel-lined plate and set aside.

Add the remaining teaspoon of oil to the pan, then add the leeks, garlic, and thyme. Cook and stir for 2 minutes. Add the kale and season with salt and pepper, and cook for another 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until the kale has wilted. (The sauce can be made ahead up to this point, and set aside for an hour or two before the meal.)

About ten minutes before serving, add the pasta to the boiling water, and cook according to package directions. Stir the wine and paprika into the kale mixture and bring to a simmer, stirring occasionally, for about five minutes. Add the sausage and clams (with any accumulated juices), and cook, stirring, just until clams are opaque. Increase heat to high, add the cream, and stir to coat all the ingredients with the cream. Stir in the cooked pasta, and serve immediately, sprinkled with cheese.