

Fregola alla Norma

Recipe courtesy of Kate McMillen For Oregon Home Magazine

Makes 4 servings | 30 minutes prep + 1 hour cook time

For a recent feature in Oregon Home Magazine, Laretta Jean's owner Kate McMillen (life- and dinner party-partner to Wellspent's own Noah Cable) shows how she uses Toasted Fregola in her twist on the classic Sicilian dish Pasta alla Norma. It's an easy, (almost) one-pot recipe perfect for the summer/fall transition.

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

2 large shallots, finely chopped (¾ cup)

3 large cloves garlic, minced

1 serrano pepper, deseeded & minced

½ cup chopped parsley

Salt & Pepper

8 oz cherry tomatoes, halved

1 bell pepper, chopped

28 can chopped tomatoes

1 cup Toasted Fregola

1 eggplant, cubed

1/2 oz grated pecorino

½ cup plus more for garnish, chopped Basil

8 oz fresh mozzarella, torn into chunks

Step 1 Heat oven to 425, drizzle the cubed eggplant with a healthy dose of olive oil and season with salt. Roast on a sheet pan for 25 - 30 minutes until tender and browned. Toss halfway through baking for even browning. .

Step 2 In a dutch oven or similar deep pot, saute shallot in olive oil for 3 minutes until soft.

Step 3 Add prepared garlic, serrano pepper & parsley. Saute 2 minutes, stirring often.

Step 4 Add cherry tomatoes & chopped pepper. Add about a teaspoon of salt and several grinds of black pepper. Saute until the tomatoes have burst, about 5 minutes.

Step 5 Add the can of tomatoes and their juices, let simmer for 10 minutes until thickened up a bit.

Step 6 Add 2 ¼ cups water with the fregola. Simmer for about 15 minutes until the fregola is al dente.

Step 7 Turn off the heat and let stand 5-10 minutes while the fregola soaks up the sauce and thickens a bit. Add the eggplant, stir in the grated pecorino, basil and the torn up mozzarella. Add salt and pepper.

Step 8 Garnish with more basil.