Tomato Sardine Pasta

Three moderate main-dish pasta bowls · Active 15 min · Total 35 min

Skills: Measuring packing oil and preserving canned fish flakes in a reduced pasta sauce

Ingredients

• 8 oz dry spaghetti (225 g)

• About 8 cups pasta water (2 L), or package-specified amount

• 2 cans sardines packed in oil, about 4.4 oz/125 g net each, yielding about 6 1/3 oz/180 g drained fish

• 1 tablespoon oil reserved from the sardine cans (15 ml); if the cans provide less, top up only to this amount with neutral oil

• 1 small onion, finely chopped (100 g)

• 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped (6 g)

• 1 can chopped tomatoes, 14–14 1/2 oz/400–411 g, including juice

• 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano (0.5 g)

• 1/4 teaspoon black pepper (0.5 g)

• Up to 1/4 cup reserved pasta cooking water (60 ml), taken from the pot

Set out

Large saucepan, at least 4 qt/4 L, Wide skillet, Colander, Measuring cup, Tongs or 2 spoons, Can opener if needed

Allergens

fish, wheat. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Drain sardines, reserving 15 ml packing oil. Inspect and separate into large flakes, removing any unwanted hard pieces. Keep briefly refrigerated while the sauce and pasta cook.

2. Bring pasta water to a boil and cook spaghetti according to its package until tender. Before draining, reserve 60 ml cooking water.

3. Meanwhile heat the measured sardine oil in the skillet over medium heat. Cook onion for 7–8 minutes, add garlic for 30 seconds, then tomatoes with juice, oregano and pepper. Simmer uncovered for 10–12 minutes until thickened.

4. Add drained hot spaghetti to the sauce and lift gently with tongs. Add reserved cooking water a tablespoon at a time only if too dry. Fold in sardine pieces and heat gently for 2–3 minutes until hot throughout, without breaking them into a paste. Divide among 3 bowls.

No extra topping required

Keep the fish pieces intact when folding them through the tomato pasta. A broad spoon or tongs is gentler than repeatedly pressing the sardines against the pan.

Ingredient labels

Sardines supply fish and spaghetti normally supplies wheat; some pasta contains egg. Read the actual fish and pasta labels for additional ingredients.

A useful detail

Sardine can sizes and drained yields vary. The cooking oil is 15 ml total, not the entire contents of two cans. Pasta and tomato cooking overlap in the 35-minute timetable.

Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow portions within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or below and use within 2 days or the fish label’s shorter opened-food limit. Reheat a portion to 165°F/74°C throughout with a little water, folding gently. Freeze promptly cooled portions for up to 1 month; thaw in the refrigerator. Fish flakes and pasta soften after freezing.