



Rigatoni Campagnolo is a hearty and flavorful Italian pasta dish that perfectly balances rich tomato sauce, savory Italian sausage, and creamy goat cheese. Originating from rustic Italian kitchens, this dish has become a favorite among pasta lovers. The name “Campagnolo” translates to “country-style,” reflecting its simple yet robust ingredients. Whether served at a family gathering or a cozy dinner, Rigatoni Campagnolo offers a comforting meal bursting with bold flavors.

The key to making Rigatoni Campagnolo special lies in its combination of textures and tastes. The ridged rigatoni pasta holds onto the zesty tomato sauce, while the sausage adds a delightful meaty depth. The addition of goat cheese creates a creamy and tangy contrast that melts beautifully into the dish. If you’re looking for a restaurant-quality pasta dish that you can easily prepare at home, Rigatoni Campagnolo is the perfect choice.

How to Make Rigatoni Campagnolo: A Step-by-Step Recipe

Preparing Rigatoni Campagnolo at home is easier than you might think. With the right ingredients and a few simple steps, you can create an authentic Italian dish that will impress your family and friends. Follow this detailed recipe to bring the rich flavors of Rigatoni Campagnolo to your table.

Ingredients:

- 1 pound rigatoni pasta
- 2 red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and sliced
- 1 small red onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 links of Italian sausage (hot or mild)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 (28 oz) can crushed tomatoes
- 3 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional, for spice)
- 4 ounces goat cheese, cut into slices

Step 1: Prepare the Ingredients

Before you start cooking, gather all the ingredients to streamline the cooking process. Slice



the red bell peppers and chop the onion. Mince the garlic finely for even distribution in the sauce. If using sausage links, remove them from their casings for easier cooking.

Step 2: Cook the Sausage

In a large heavy-bottomed pan, heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat. Add the Italian sausage and cook until browned on all sides. If using whole links, slice them into bite-sized pieces after browning. If using ground sausage, break it into small chunks with a wooden spoon as it cooks.

Step 3: Sauté the Vegetables

Once the sausage is cooked, remove it from the pan and set it aside. In the same pan, add the remaining olive oil and sauté the chopped onion until soft and translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the minced garlic and cook for an additional minute, ensuring it doesn't burn.

Step 4: Make the Tomato Sauce

Pour the crushed tomatoes into the pan, stirring to combine them with the onions and garlic. Add the chopped basil, salt, black pepper, and red pepper flakes if you prefer some heat. Let the sauce simmer for about 15 minutes to allow the flavors to blend.

Step 5: Cook the Rigatoni Pasta

While the sauce is simmering, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the rigatoni pasta and cook until al dente, following the package instructions. Once cooked, drain the pasta but reserve about 1/2 cup of pasta water to help thicken the sauce if needed.

Step 6: Combine Everything

Return the cooked sausage to the pan with the tomato sauce. Add the sliced red bell peppers and let the mixture cook for another 5 minutes. If the sauce is too thick, add a splash of the reserved pasta water to reach the desired consistency.

Step 7: Assemble and Serve

Add the cooked rigatoni pasta to the pan, tossing it well to coat every piece with the sauce. Divide the pasta into serving bowls and place a slice of goat cheese on top of each portion. The heat from the pasta will slightly melt the cheese, creating a creamy, tangy finish.



Step 8: Enjoy!

Serve your Rigatoni Campagnolo hot, garnished with extra basil or grated Parmesan cheese if desired. Pair it with a glass of red wine and a side of crusty Italian bread for an authentic dining experience.

The Secret Ingredients That Make Rigatoni Campagnolo Irresistible

Every great dish has a few secret ingredients that elevate its flavor, and Rigatoni Campagnolo is no exception. Understanding these key components will help you perfect the recipe and make it even more delicious.

1. High-Quality Italian Sausage

The type of sausage you use can significantly impact the flavor of Rigatoni Campagnolo. Opt for a high-quality Italian sausage, either mild or spicy, depending on your preference. If you want a leaner option, turkey or chicken sausage works just as well.

2. Crushed Tomatoes for a Robust Sauce

Using canned crushed tomatoes instead of tomato puree gives the sauce a chunkier texture and a fresher taste. Look for imported Italian tomatoes, such as San Marzano, for the best results.

3. Goat Cheese for a Creamy Finish

Unlike traditional Parmesan, goat cheese adds a creamy and tangy touch that balances the savory sausage and rich tomato sauce. If you prefer a milder cheese, ricotta or burrata can be used as alternatives.

4. Fresh Basil for Aromatic Depth

Fresh basil enhances the sauce with its aromatic and slightly sweet notes. Always add basil towards the end of cooking to preserve its fresh flavor.



5. A Hint of Red Pepper Flakes for Spice

For those who enjoy a bit of heat, red pepper flakes add a subtle kick that enhances the overall taste of Rigatoni Campagnolo without overpowering the dish.

Pairing Rigatoni Campagnolo: Best Wines and Sides to Complement Your Dish

A great meal isn't just about the main dish—it's also about the perfect pairings that enhance the flavors. Here are the best wine and side dish options to serve with Rigatoni Campagnolo.

Best Wine Pairings:

- **Chianti Classico** – A medium-bodied red wine with bright acidity that balances the richness of the [sausage and tomato sauce](#).
- **Barbera d'Asti** – Offers fruity notes that complement the tangy goat cheese.
- **Sangiovese** – A classic Italian wine that pairs beautifully with tomato-based pasta dishes.
- **Zinfandel** – Its bold, jammy flavors contrast nicely with the spice in the sausage.

Ideal Side Dishes:

- **Garlic Bread** – A crispy, buttery side that soaks up the delicious tomato sauce.
- **Caesar Salad** – A refreshing contrast to the rich pasta dish.
- **Roasted Vegetables** – Such as zucchini, eggplant, or asparagus, add extra nutrients and texture.
- **Caprese Salad** – Fresh tomatoes, mozzarella, and basil provide a light and complementary side.

Final Thoughts

Rigatoni Campagnolo is more than just a pasta dish—it's a comforting meal that brings people together. Whether you're making it for a special occasion or a quick weeknight dinner, this dish delivers bold flavors, rich textures, and an unforgettable dining experience. With the right ingredients and simple cooking techniques, you can recreate this Italian classic at home and impress your guests with every bite. Buon Appetito!