

Orecchiette with sausage and cime di rapa

If using dried pasta, use 400 g of your chosen shape.

Serves 4-6

Pasta dough

400 g semolina flour (semola rimacinata), plus extra for dusting

fine sea salt

Sausage and cime di rapa sauce

1 bunch cime di rapa, trimmed

4 mild pork sausages

3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve

3 cloves garlic, finely chopped

dried chilli flakes

150 ml white wine

Salt, to taste

For the pasta dough, place the flour onto a clean work surface or into a large bowl and mix with a large pinch of salt. Make a well in the centre and slowly pour in about 200 ml warm water. Using your hands, bring a little flour at a time into the water until you have a rough dough. Use a pastry scraper to bring it all together. Knead for 10 minutes or until smooth. Cover with an upturned bowl and set aside for at least 30 minutes.

Cut off a small piece of dough (keeping the remaining covered with the upturned bowl) and roll dough into a rope about 1 cm thick. Cut the rope into 1.5cm lengths. Take one length and, using a flat, non-serrated butter knife, place the knife on top of the piece of dough and drag it towards you, with the knife at a 30 degree angle – the dough should curl up a bit as you drag it and slightly stick to the knife.

Using your index finger and thumb, gently invert the orecchiette and pull it away from the knife. This is best done on a wooden board. Place the orecchiette onto a board or tea towel generously dusted with semolina flour. Repeat with the rest of the dough, arranging the shapes in a single layer to ensure they don't stick to each other.

For the sauce, blanch the cime di rapa then refresh in iced water. Squeeze out excess water and roughly chop. Set aside.

Have your pot of water on the stove, seasoned with salt, ready to cook the pasta.

Remove the sausages from their casing and set aside. Warm the olive oil in a large pan over a medium heat. Add the sausages and cook for 3-4 minutes, or until golden, breaking them up with a wooden spoon. Add the garlic and a good pinch of dried chilli flakes (or to taste). And stir to coat. Cook for 30 seconds, or until fragrant.

Pour in the wine and deglaze the pan, scraping the bottom of the pan with the wooden spoon to release any bits from the base. Add the cooked cime di rapa and a splash of the pasta cooking water to help create a sauce. Reduce the heat to low and cook for 4-5 more minutes, adding more water, as needed.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta in the pot of salted boiling water until just before al dente. Transfer using a sieve or slotted spoon directly into the pan with the sauce. Increase the heat to high and continue cooking the pasta in the sauce, adding more pasta water, until the pasta is cooked. Season to taste.

Serve with plenty of good extra virgin olive oil.