



the salt & stone

Asparagus Carbonara

- 4-5 slices center-cut slab bacon, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1 pound pasta of choice (penne)
- 1 bunch asparagus (about a pound), woody ends cut off, trimmed into 1-inch pieces
- 1 Walla Walla sweet onion, diced
- 3 teaspoons spring garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 4-6 large eggs (1 per serving)
- 1/4 cup, thinly sliced basil
- 1/2 cup shredded parmesan cheese
- Red pepper flakes (optional)
- Salt and pepper

Set a large pot of water over high heat. At the same time heat a large skillet or frying pan over medium heat. Add the olive oil to the pan and cook the bacon pieces until the bacon is crispy and cooked through. Remove the bacon from the pan with a slotted spoon and drain on a paper towel lined plate. Turn the heat on the pan to low and add the onion. Cook for two to three minutes. Add the garlic and cook for an additional minute. Salt and pepper the onion and garlic mixture. Add the butter to the pan along with the asparagus and cook until the asparagus is bright green and tender, about eight minutes. When the asparagus is finished, turn the heat off to the pan and set aside.

When the pot of water boils, stir in a big handful of salt along with the pasta. When the pasta is tender, drain away the water reserving 1/4 cup of pasta water. Going back to your pan, turn the heat to medium-low and stir in the bacon and pasta, mixing gently to combine the asparagus mixture with the pasta. Add a splash or two of the pasta water over the pasta and sprinkle with parmesan cheese. Toss gently to combine. Salt and pepper the pasta and add a pinch or two red pepper flakes along with half the fresh basil. Reserve the rest of the basil to garnish individual servings. Turn heat off and set aside.

Using a small fry pan, heat the pan over medium-high heat. Spray the pan with a little cooking spray or melt a little butter in the pan. When the pan is hot, crack the egg, making sure not to break the yolk. Cook for 2 minutes or until the egg white is firm but the yolk is still very runny. Splash a teaspoon of water into the pan and cover with a lid for about 30 seconds to slightly firm up the top of the egg. Uncover and using a spatula, remove the egg from the pan and start again until you have one fried egg per person.

To serve, scoop pasta onto a plate and lay an egg over the pasta. Garnish with more fresh basil a sprinkle of parmesan cheese and black pepper.

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