



Pasta with Goat Cheese, Lemon and Asparagus

Ingredients:

1 lb fusilli or rotini (I recommend using a whole wheat variety)

1 1lb slender asparagus spears, trimmed into 1-1.5" pieces

1/4 cup olive oil

1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest

2 teaspoons chopped fresh tarragon

1 5 oz log soft fresh goat cheese (do not buy crumbles - they don't melt as well!)

Instructions:

Cook pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water until almost tender, about 7 minutes (longer if using whole wheat pasta). Add asparagus and cook until pasta is done, about 2-3 minutes. While pasta is cooking, combine oil, zest and tarragon in a large bowl. Crumble in the goat cheese.

Drain the pasta and asparagus, reserving 1 cup of the cooking liquid. Add the hot pasta, asparagus and 1/4 cup of cooking liquid to the bowl with the goat cheese mixture. Toss to coat, adding more cooking liquid if dry. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Variation: If you would like to add some protein to this dish, try one of the following - seared shrimp, shredded rotisserie chicken or chicken sausage cooked without the casing and crumbled (this was my choice). Just add the protein of your choice at the end to the finished pasta dish.