



Smoky Pasta with Caramelized Cauliflower

By Chef Veera Gaul, Ph.D.



Ingredients

(* indicates my preferred ingredients – see notes for alternatives)

- 4-5 tablespoons O&V [Smoky Garlic oil](#) *
- 4 cups cauliflower florets, cut into small bite size pieces
- 4-6 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- Sprinkle of crushed red pepper, to taste
- 12 oz penne pasta or spaghetti
- ¼ - ½ teaspoon salt, plus more for boiling pasta
- ½ cup grated Parmesan or Pecorino Romano cheese
- 1 bunch parsley, chopped (about 6-7 tablespoons)
- 2 tablespoons cold unsalted butter
- Drizzle of O&V [Date Balsam vinegar](#) or [Date Bacon vinegar](#) *
- 5 slices thick cut bacon, chopped (optional)

Preparation

Prepare a large baking sheet with a layer of parchment paper. Preheat the oven to 450F. Toss the cauliflower and garlic in 2 tablespoons of smoky oil, and season

generously with salt, pepper and crushed red pepper. Spread in a single layer on the baking sheet and roast in the oven for 18-20 minutes, stirring once at the halfway point.

If using bacon, cook until crisp and set aside.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil, cook the pasta according to package directions until al dente. Drain, reserving ½ cup of cooking water. Return the empty pot to the stove.

Add the remaining 2-3 tablespoons smoky garlic oil to the pot on the stove. Add the cooked pasta and roasted cauliflower to the pot. Add half the cooked bacon (if using). Cook over medium heat for 1-2 minutes, stirring often.

Remove from heat, stir in the butter, ¼ cup EACH of grated cheese and parsley, and ¼ cup of reserved pasta water. Add more pasta water as needed to moisten and create a slight sauce.

Drizzle the Date Balsam (vegetarian option) or Date Bacon vinegar (non-vegetarian option) on the serving plates, and then pile the pasta and cauliflower over the vinegar. Sprinkle with remaining cheese, parsley and bacon (if using). Serve immediately.

Serves 4

Active time 30 minutes Total Time: 30 minutes

Notes

* The [Smoky Garlic oil](#) and the [Date Balsam vinegar](#) are essential items to provide that smoky and bacon-y taste without using real meat. Intensify that meatiness by using the non-vegetarian [Date Bacon vinegar](#) if you prefer. Either way this is a fulfilling meatless dish with all the umami flavors of smokiness and bacon.

All the highlighted products available at [Oil & Vinegar stores](#)

Categories: Entrée, Easy Weeknight Meal, Quick Dinner, Cauliflower, Date Bacon Vinegar, Smoky Garlic Oil, Smokey flavors, Vegetarian, Meatless Meal,