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- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper, (optional)
- 12 ounces whole-wheat angel hair pasta
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley, or basil

## Directions

1. Put a pot of water on to boil.
2. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add eggplant and cook, stirring occasionally, until just softened, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Add tomatoes, olives, vinegar, capers, salt, pepper and crushed red pepper (if using) and cook, stirring, until the tomatoes begin to break down, 5 to 7 minutes more.
3. Meanwhile, cook pasta in boiling water until just tender, about 6 minutes or according to package directions. Drain and divide the pasta among 6 shallow bowls. Spoon the sauce over the pasta and sprinkle parsley (or basil) on top.

\*\*\*\*\*From *EatingWell.com*\*\*\*\*\*

## Gnocchi with Zucchini Ribbons & Parsley Brown Butter

4 servings, 1 1/2 cups each

### Ingredients

- 1 pound fresh or frozen gnocchi
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 medium shallots, chopped
- 1 pound zucchini, (about 3 small), very thinly sliced lengthwise (see Tip)
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon grated nutmeg
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley

### Directions

1. Bring a large saucepan of water to a boil. Cook gnocchi until they float, 3 to 5 minutes or according to package directions. Drain.
2. Meanwhile, melt butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook until the butter is beginning to brown, about 2 minutes. Add shallots and zucchini and cook, stirring often, until softened, 2 to 3 minutes. Add tomatoes, salt, nutmeg and pepper and continue cooking, stirring often, until the tomatoes are just starting to break down, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in Parmesan and parsley. Add the gnocchi and toss to coat. Serve immediately.

## The Apprentice Perspective

This past week we “lowered and leaned” our hoop house tomatoes. Many of the plants had outgrown the strings supporting them, so we let more string out and leaned the plants to allow them more room to grow. This task made me consider how far those plants have come and how much work goes in to growing delicious, various, and beautiful tomatoes.

In February, the tomatoes were seeded in the office on top of heat mats and beneath grow lights. Dev and Dave then grafted beautiful varieties of tomatoes that have trouble fighting off disease onto vigorous, disease resistant varieties. Grafting is a painstakingly tedious process and post-grafting care requires watchful management and a little prayer. The plants made it through the process. As they grew, they were potted up to fifty-cell trays, 4-inch pots, and then 6-inch pots.

While the tomatoes were growing into and out of their temporary homes, we spent the first part of the early spring building them a permanent home. The hoop house project was a tremendous undertaking. We spent a lot of time planning, pounding in stakes, bending truss braces, realizing there were issues we didn’t plan for, the list goes on and on. When we finished the house, the tomatoes were begging to get out of their 6-inch pots.

To prepare the soil, we plowed the new ground, added compost and organic fertilizers, plowed again, rototilled, marked and shaped the beds. We then set up hooks and hung the strings that support the plants. Next we planted and clipped the tomatoes to the string. To help with weed control, we mulched the plants with leaves. As they grew in the house, we plucked suckers off of the plants to direct their growth upward instead of outward and continued clipping higher and higher up the string, a process called “clipping and pruning”. The seeds that were lovingly planted and cared for in February are now more than ten feet tall.

The growth and maintenance of the tomato plant throughout the season expresses why I love farming so much. You can appreciate the hard work that goes into each and every item at distribution, but being there every step of the way makes the food taste so much better. Growing food is nerve wracking, mentally challenging, physically demanding, and even when you get everything right there is still an element of luck.

From hoophouse plans to variety selection to seeding and grafting in February to planting and transplanting to mulching to clipping and pruning, a lot of time has been spent growing and thinking about growing these hoop house tomatoes. The hard work makes the fruits ultimately that much more delicious and satisfying. I hope you taste our efforts in every bite of

tomato you take, and if you've never grown anything, give it a try! Food tastes better when you grow it. —*Sam Allison*

\*\*\*\*\**From EatingWell.com*\*\*\*\*\*

### **Baked Parmesan Tomatoes - 4 servings**

#### **Ingredients**

- 4 tomatoes, halved horizontally
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 4 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil

#### **Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 450° F.
2. Place tomatoes cut-side up on a baking sheet. Top with Parmesan, oregano, salt and pepper. Drizzle with oil and bake until the tomatoes are tender, about 15 minutes.

\*\*\*\*\**From EatingWell.com*\*\*\*\*\*

### **Kale & Gruyère Panini - 4 servings**

#### **Ingredients**

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 8 cups chopped kale
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 8 slices country bread (1/4 inch thick), preferably whole-wheat
- Olive oil cooking spray
- 1 cup shredded Gruyère or fontina cheese
- 1 medium tomato, cut into 8 thin slices

#### **Directions**

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring frequently, until golden brown, 5 to 7 minutes. Add vinegar and cook until almost evaporated, about 1 minute. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add kale, water and salt (the pan will be full). Stir, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the kale is wilted and the water has evaporated, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat.
2. To prepare panini: Preheat panini maker to high. Coat one side of each slice of bread with cooking spray. With the sprayed side down, spread the kale mixture on 4 slices of bread (about 1/2 cup

per sandwich). Top each with 1/4 cup cheese and 2 slices tomato. Top with the remaining bread, sprayed-side up. Press in the panini maker until crispy, 3 to 5 minutes.

\*\*\*\*\**From EatingWell.com*\*\*\*\*\*

### **Mozzarella, Basil & Zucchini Frittata - 4 servings**

#### **Ingredients**

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 1/2 cups thinly sliced red onion
- 1 1/2 cups chopped zucchini
- 7 large eggs, beaten
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 2/3 cup pearl-size or baby fresh mozzarella balls (about 4 ounces)
- 3 tablespoons chopped soft sun-dried tomatoes
- 1/4 cup thinly sliced fresh basil

#### **Directions**

1. Position rack in upper third of oven; preheat broiler.
2. Heat oil in a large broiler-safe nonstick or cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and zucchini and cook, stirring frequently, until soft, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, whisk eggs, salt and pepper in a bowl. Pour the eggs over the vegetables in the pan. Cook, lifting the edges to allow uncooked egg from the middle to flow underneath, until nearly set, about 2 minutes. Arrange mozzarella and sun-dried tomatoes on top and place the skillet under the broiler until the eggs are slightly browned, 1 1/2 to 2 minutes. Let stand for 3 minutes. Top with basil.
4. To release the frittata from the pan, run a spatula around the edge, then underneath, until you can slide or lift it out onto a cutting board or serving plate. Cut into 4 slices and serve.

\*\*\*\* *From EatingWell.com* \*\*\*\*

### **Eggplant Pomodoro Pasta - 6 servings**

#### **Ingredients**

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium eggplant, (about 1 pound), cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 plum tomatoes, diced
- 1/3 cup chopped pitted green olives
- 2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 4 teaspoons capers, rinsed