



UP
front

'Spring in a bowl...

I planted flowers. I am not an enthusiastic gardener. Nor am I adept at keeping things alive. Yet I can't resist the temptation, when the weather begins to nudge us to the dirt.

It's spring. Daylight reclaims the evening hours it had abandoned. Walls loosen their hold on us. There's levity where there was labor. Spring is casual, informal, a relief.

Food editor Sam Sifton has written a book, cleverly titled *The New York Times Cooking No-Recipe Recipes*. The text promotes the culinary style that best suits both spring's non-chalance and my own aversion to stricture: Improvisation.

With blooms in every eyeline, I yearned to concoct something light and fresh. The result was exhilarating. This is my Farfalle Primavera, as a no-recipe recipe would explain it.

Enter the market thinking: Green. Collect at least three verdant veggies; I chose a small bag of freshly shelled English peas, a bunch of medium-thickness asparagus, and a heaping handful of French beans. The remaining produce: A large container of substantial grape tomatoes, a cluster of scallions, garlic, and a lemon. You probably have the following items at home; if not, you'll need to pick some up: Butter, heavy cream, white wine (I chose a Gavi, consistent with my innate Italophilia), red pepper flakes, a hunk of Reggiano-Parmigiano cheese, and salt. Don't forget a box of farfalle, the bowties that kids love.

Butter, cream, cheese....this is going to be heavy, right? Trust me, it's not. You won't use big quantities of these ingredients, just enough to put the sauce over the top.

As to amounts, the ratio, one-half, suggested itself to me. Half of the bag of peas, half of the bunch of asparagus. There's no magic to it, but roughly equal volumes of the green veggies make intuitive sense (with a cheat towards extra asparagus, to my taste).

Roughly chop the scallions. Halve the tomatoes. Cut the asparagus and beans into bite-sized (big bites) pieces. Mince a couple of cloves of garlic. Grate a pile of cheese.

Bring a large pot of water to boil. Salt liberally. Blanch the green veggies for 3 to 5 minutes (don't allow them to soften significantly or their color to dull). Remove and run under cold water, drain, and set aside.

Add salt to the boiling water, drop the pasta in, and cook as directed on the package (for the shorter amount of time specified in the suggested range).

Melt a knob of butter in a high-side pan, like a Dutch oven, over medium-high heat. Add the scallions, salt, and saute for a minute or two. Add the garlic, red pepper, tomatoes and a bit more salt to season. Cook for about 5 minutes, as the tomatoes begin to break down a bit. Add the green veggies and season again. Stir well and heat through. Increase heat to high. Pour in a few swigs of wine and cook off. Grate lemon zest onto the vegetables, reduce heat to medium, and add a little (not too much) cream. Simmer until the pasta is cooked. Drain the farfalle, add it to the pan, toss with grated cheese and fold diligently to incorporate the whole thing.

Spring in a bowl.

Scott A. Laurer



Congratulations, CLASS OF 2021!

The annual rite of spring
that has become
The Skinny Graduation Issue
is fast approaching.



Send us those high school senior photos and a sentence or two about your plans for the future, where you plan to attend college, what high school you are graduating from, and we will be happy to include them as part of our salute to the Class of 2021.

Email your submissions to mail@theskinnie.com or drop them by our office: 15 Lake Street, Suite 280 (across from Publix).

HURRY! DEADLINE IS JUNE 11!