

Linguini with Lemon-Roasted Asparagus and Goat Cheese

By Katie Goodman

➔ Ask me what my favorite spring vegetable is and I'll probably tell you asparagus. It's been one of my favorites for as long as I can remember. I still have memories of eating it and loving it as a young child, before kindergarten. When I was older, my siblings would sneak some of theirs onto my plate because they didn't like it (though they do now as adults) and knew I did.

Asparagus is a great spring vegetable to consider for your garden. Because asparagus is a perennial, you plant it once and enjoy it for many years to come (provided you don't move, of course). When I planted my asparagus, the nursery instructed me not to harvest it the first



couple of years so the plant's root system can become strong. Although it doesn't provide immediate gratification like many other garden vegetables, it was one that I definitely wanted to include and was willing to wait for. This recipe combines lemony roasted asparagus with garlic, shallots, Dijon, pasta, and creamy goat cheese for a delicious spring meal.

Ingredients

Serves 2:

- 1 bunch asparagus about 1 lb.
- 3 shallots
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- Zest of 1 lemon
- Juice of 1 lemon
- ½ tsp Dijon mustard
- ¼ tsp salt more to taste, if desired
- ¼ tsp white pepper
- 6 oz linguini
- 2 tsp fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 oz soft goat cheese

Directions

Preheat oven to 450° F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil or a nonstick silicone baking sheet. Set aside. Prepare the pasta according to the package instructions.

Remove the tough stems of the asparagus by holding them and snapping. Stems will naturally break at the correct spot. Compost the tough, woody stems for use in your garden, if you like.

Then, cut each spear into 1½" pieces. Place the asparagus in a colander, rinse, shake dry, and arrange in a single layer on the baking sheet.

Prepare the shallots by peeling, slicing in half lengthwise, and slicing into half moons about ¼" thick. Toss with the asparagus.

In a medium-sized bowl or liquid measuring cup add the olive oil, garlic, lemon zest and juice, Dijon mustard, salt, and pepper. Whisk to combine. Pour the oil mixture over the asparagus and shallots, tossing to coat evenly.

Place the baking sheet on a rack in the upper third of the oven. Roast the asparagus for 6 minutes. Toss the hot pasta with the fresh parsley and the roasted asparagus mixture. Add salt and pepper, if desired. Prepare each plate with the pasta topped with chunks of goat cheese and garnished with a slice of lemon. Serve immediately.

📄 For more information on planting and growing asparagus, see <http://www.extension.umn.edu/yardandgarden/ygbriefs/H204asparagus.html>