

Penne with Asparagus, Arugula and Ricotta

Serves 4

- 340 g thin asparagus, cut into 2.5-cm lengths
- Salt
- 340 g penne or bow-tie pasta
- 125 g fresh ricotta
- 2 T extra virgin olive oil
- Generous handful of arugula, rinsed and spun dry (about 1 C tightly packed)
- Freshly ground pepper
- 30 g freshly grated Parmesan



1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil, and add a generous amount of salt. Add the **asparagus**. Cook pencil-thin asparagus for **two minutes**, three to four minutes if stems are medium-thick. Transfer to a bowl of ice-cold water. Drain and set aside. (Or roast asparagus with olive oil and salt)
2. Place the **ricotta** in a large pasta bowl.
3. Bring the water back to a boil, and add the **pasta**. Cook al dente, following the directions for timing on the package but checking a minute before the suggested cooking time.
4. Stir **80 ml of the pasta cooking water** into the **ricotta**.
5. Drain the pasta and toss at once with the **olive oil** and **ricotta**, the **arugula**, **asparagus** and **parmesan**. Serve hot.

Variations:

- ✓ Add lemon juice and herbs de Provence
- ✓ Black pepper
- ✓ 2-3 strips bacon
- ✓ Pine nuts