

Ultimate Creamy Garlic Butter Beef Penne with Sausage and Spinach

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TIME
3-5 min

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INGREDIENTS

1 lb Penne Pasta: The ridges are essential for "grabbing" the cream sauce.

1 lb Ground Beef: I recommend an 80/20 or 90/10 lean ratio.

1 lb Italian Sausage: Casings removed; spicy or mild both work great!

1 cup Chicken Broth: This helps deglaze the pan and build the base of the sauce.

1 cup Heavy Cream: For that signature velvety texture.

1 cup Freshly Grated Parmesan: Don't use the stuff in the green shaker bottle! Freshly grated melts much better.

1 cup Shredded Mozzarella: For a gooey, cheese-pull finish.

2 tablespoons Cajun Seasoning: Adds a nice "kick" and depth.

1 tablespoon Italian Seasoning: For that classic herbal note.

Fresh Spinach (3-4 cups): It looks like a lot, but it will wilt down perfectly.

4-5 Cloves Garlic (Minced): Because you can never have too much garlic.

3 tablespoons Butter: The "butter" in Garlic Butter!

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Boil the : Pasta:** Cook your penne in a large pot of salted water until al dente. Drain and set aside, but keep about a half-cup of pasta water just in case you want to thin the sauce later.
- 2. Brown the : Meats:** In a large skillet or Dutch oven, brown the ground beef and Italian sausage together over medium-high heat. Break them into small crumbles as they cook. Drain the excess grease.
- 3. Aromatize:** Add the butter to the skillet with the meat. Once melted, toss in the minced garlic and cook for about 60 seconds until fragrant.
- 4. Season and : Deglaze:** Stir in the Cajun and Italian seasonings. Pour in the chicken broth, scraping the bottom of the pan to get all those flavorful "fond" bits.
- 5. Create the : Cream Sauce:** Lower the heat to medium and stir in the heavy cream. Let it simmer gently for 3-5 minutes until it begins to slightly thicken.
- 6. Cheese it : Up:** Stir in the Parmesan and mozzarella cheeses until melted and smooth.
- 7. Combine:** Toss in the cooked penne and the fresh spinach. Fold everything together until the spinach is wilted and the pasta is completely coated in that glorious sauce.
- 8. Final : Touch:** Season with salt and pepper to taste and serve immediately.

SWAPS & NOTES

of fennel and pepper, while the Cajun and Italian seasonings add a subtle heat and herbal aroma.

Another reason I'm obsessed with this dish is the sauce.

Instead of a traditional red sauce, we create a garlic butter cream sauce that coats every single ridge of the penne.

It's the kind of meal that feels like it came from a high-end bistro but is actually as simple to pull together as a Mexican chicken and rice casserole.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Don't Overcook the Pasta: Since the penne will sit in a hot sauce for a few minutes at the end, cooking it to "al dente" prevents it from becoming mushy.

Fresh Garlic is King: While jarred garlic is convenient, fresh cloves provide a much sharper, better flavor for this specific garlic butter base.

Control the Salt: Both the sausage and the Cajun seasoning contain salt, so I recommend tasting the sauce before adding any additional salt at the end.

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