



Green Up Your Meals This St. Patrick's Day

Put away the green food coloring and take a different approach to greening up your meals this St. Patrick's Day. Broccoli, green bell pepper and zucchini will do all the work for you with components that research has shown may reduce the risk of certain cancers. With more than a cup of vegetables in each serving and whole grains to boot, this recipe is lean, green and sure to bring good health to any table.

Penne with Vegetables

8 oz. uncooked whole-wheat penne pasta
4 cups broccoli florets
2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 small onion, thinly sliced
1 medium green bell pepper, cut into thin slices
1 medium red bell pepper, cut into thin slices
1 1/2 cups sliced fresh mushrooms
1 medium zucchini, sliced, about 2 cups
1/2 cup fat-free, reduced-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
1-2 tsp. dried Italian seasoning
2 large fresh tomatoes, diced
4 cups fresh chopped spinach leaves
1/2 tsp. grated fresh lemon rind
Salt and pepper to taste
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese (Pecorino Romano may be substituted)
1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, for garnish

Cook pasta per package directions. Add broccoli last 2 minutes of cooking time. Drain pasta/broccoli well and set aside in a large bowl.

In large skillet add 1 tbsp. oil, garlic, onion, bell peppers and mushrooms and sauté over medium-high heat stirring occasionally until onions and peppers are tender, about 2 minutes. Add zucchini and continue to sauté for another 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add broth and Italian seasoning and cook for about 1 minute.

Reduce heat to medium, add tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes, stirring frequently.

Stir in spinach and lemon rind. Cook covered for about 2 minutes or until spinach is tender.

Add cooked mixture to pasta/broccoli and toss to coat well. Season with salt and pepper.

Drizzle with remaining olive oil and top with Parmesan cheese. Garnish with fresh basil leaves.

Makes 6 servings.

Per serving: 260 calories, 8 g total fat (1.5 g saturated fat), 41 g carbohydrate, 10 g protein, 8 g dietary fiber, 150 mg sodium.