

Tortellini with Garlicky Tomato Sauce

Serves 8

2 t. olive oil

6 small zucchini, trimmed and diced

1 onion, chopped

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 ½ c. marinara sauce

½ t. kosher salt or salt to taste

1/2 t. red pepper flakes

¼ t. black pepper, or to taste

8 c. tightly packed baby spinach (about 1 lb) (I only used a 5 oz package of baby spinach which was just right.)

6 c. frozen cheese tortellini (about 18 oz.)

½ c. diced part-skim mozzarella cheese (I used mini mozzarella balls.)

Fresh basil leaves for garnish

Heat oil in large heavy nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add zucchini and onion and cook, stirring frequently, until lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add marinara sauce, salt, pepper flakes and black pepper.

Add spinach, in batches, adding more as each batch is wilted. Reduce heat to medium and cook, covered, 3 minutes, stirring once or twice.

Spoon 2 cups marinara-spinach mixture into a 6-quart slow cooker. Place half of tortellini on top forming even layer. Repeat layering with 2 cups marinara-spinach mixture and remaining tortellini. Spoon remaining marinara-spinach mixture on top and sprinkle with ¼ cup mozzarella. Cover and cook until tortellini are tender, about 5 hours on Low. Sprinkle with remaining ¼ cup cheese. Garnish with basil leaves, if desired.

Submitted by Chris Stahlinski