

Lemony Orzo With Asparagus and Garlic Bread Crumbs



Julia Gartland for The New York Times (Photography and S

By [Ali Slagle](#)

Total Time 20 minutes

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INGREDIENTS

Yield: 4 servings

Kosher salt and black pepper

1 cup orzo

1 pound asparagus, trimmed and thinly sliced on a diagonal (about ¼-inch thick)

Every spoonful of this pasta has a happy jumble of lemony orzo, grassy asparagus, garlicky bread crumbs, fresh herbs and salty Parmesan. The pasta and thinly sliced asparagus cook together in the same pot, then in a lemony dressing while the garlic bread crumbs are toasted, so the pasta has time to absorb as much flavor as possible.

PREPARATION

Step 1

Bring a medium pot of salted water to a boil. Add the orzo and cook until al dente according to package directions. Two minutes before the orzo is done, add the asparagus. Drain the orzo and asparagus. Wipe out and reserve the

Step 2

5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon lemon zest plus 3 tablespoons lemon juice, plus more as needed (from about 1 large lemon)

½ cup panko or homemade bread crumbs

1 small garlic clove, finely grated

¼ cup finely grated Parmesan, plus more for serving

½ cup fresh dill, mint or parsley leaves (or any combination), torn if large

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While the orzo and asparagus cook, make the dressing: large bowl, stir together 3 tablespoons oil and the lemon zest and juice; season to taste with salt and pepper. Add drained orzo and asparagus and toss to coat. Set aside while you toast the bread crumbs.

Step 3

In the reserved pot, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil over medium. Add the panko and cook, stirring, until golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat, then add in the garlic and season with salt and pepper.

Step 4

Stir the Parmesan and herbs into the orzo, taste, then season with salt, pepper and additional lemon juice, if desired. Toss with the toasted bread crumbs and more Parmesan if you like. Serve warm or at room temperature.

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