



## Rigatoni and Cauliflower Bake

*Serves 6-10*

### Ingredients

- ¾ pound whole wheat rigatoni
- 1 tablespoon salt for cooking the rigatoni
- ¼ cup Extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 large cauliflower, about 2 pounds.
- 1 teaspoon fine grained sea salt and 10 grinds of fresh black pepper
- 1 ½ tablespoon capers, rinsed and roughly chopped
- 3 large garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, or more to taste (I added more)
- 3 tablespoons roughly chopped fresh sage leaves plus a few smaller sage leaves left whole
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- 8 ounces coarsely grated fontina cheese or mozzarella or fresh white cheddar cheese
- 2 ounces finely grated parmesan cheese to top
- ½ cup coarse dry bread crumbs-lightly toast the bread first then grate-use for topping

### Instructions

Bring a large pot of water to a boil; add one tablespoon of table salt and stir in rigatoni. Stir so it doesn't stick to the bottom and cook without covering about two minutes less than package directions so it is still al dente. Drain and rinse with cold water, drain well again so no water remains and set aside.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees and put rack in lower mid oven..

Cut cauliflower off the hard core and cut away the stems. Chop the remaining flowerettes into ½ inch pieces.

Put two tablespoons (half of what you will use in total) of the olive oil in a wide 12-14 inch skillet over high heat. Add half of the cauliflower pieces, along with any crumbly pieces, in one layer. Watch as the cauliflower caramelizes for about two minutes, then turn the pieces over and continue to brown them another two minutes. It should be pretty soft and yield easily to a knife.

Scrape these into a large mixing bowl and repeat the directions with the second half of the olive oil and cauliflower. Put this into the bowl with the first batch.

To the pan, put in cooked pasta. Add capers, garlic, red pepper flakes, chopped sage, sage leaves and lemon zest and stir to coat.

Next add the cooked cauliflower mixture grated cheese and stir gently to combine evenly.

Transfer mixture to a lightly oiled baking dish. Top with parmesan cheese, then with bread crumbs and drizzle with about one and a half tablespoon olive oil. (Dish may be completed to this point up to several hours in advance and kept at room temperature, covered. Or it can be refrigerated overnight but bring to room temperature before baking.)

Bake, uncovered, for 25 to 30 minutes, until top is crisp and golden. Let it rest a few minutes before serving.