

## Quick Fix

### Gunther's Gourmet's Cheese Tortellini with Marinated Portabella Mushrooms and a Tomato and Feta Cheese Salad

**Polly Roberts**

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Cooking at home doesn't have to be complicated.

Or at least so says **Michael Lampros**, co-creator of Richmond-based **Gunther's Gourmet Groceries**. He and his brother Nick developed a line of marinades, vinaigrettes and salsas designed to add a punch to any dish, making life a lot easier for the at-home chef.

"You don't have to go get seven different ingredients," said Lampros, a certified executive chef. "We've already done it for you. Our vinaigrettes are packed with flavor . . . They let you eat at home and let you eat a lot better than fast food.

Not only does Gunther's Gourmet offer up flavorful combinations like Orange Balsamic Vinaigrette & Marinade and Crab Salsa, but all of its products are low in sodium and chemical and preservative free. Plus, a portion of Gunther's Gourmet profits are donated to the **Richmond SPCA**. Lampros' love of animals also inspired him to name the company after his brindle boxer Gunther.

Most recently featured in **Southern Living** magazine, Gunther's Gourmet is available from Michigan to Florida and should be available soon in the Pacific Northwest. Locally, the products can be found in Ukrop's and specialty stores like Ellwood Thompson's Natural Market.



Lampros has created several recipes using his marinades and salsas, including a **Cheese Tortellini with Marinated Portabella Mushrooms, Three Color Peppers and Gunther's Roasted Garlic & Sundried Tomato Marinade**.

"I really like Portobello mushrooms and the [marinade] really enhances their flavor," he explained. "It's also a unique way to use a marinade as a pasta sauce. A lot of people don't think of that."

While the dish calls for mushrooms and peppers, Lampros said the recipe can serve as a great way to get rid of scrap vegetables in the refrigerator, so cooks should feel free to add their favorite veggies. Heavy cream can

also be substituted with half and half or whole milk for a lower-calorie meal.

"If you don't like something, leave it out or change it with something you do like," Lampros said. Recipes, he added, should serve as guidelines, not restrictions.

As a side for the cheese tortellini dish, Lampros recommends serving **Tomato & Feta Cheese Salad with Gunther's Lemon Oregano Marinade**. Topped with feta, he said the salad is a nod to his Greek heritage with a more Mediterranean flavor.

"I try to make recipes with ingredients that are easy to find and don't need any special equipment," Lampros said. "You can do something simple and can make it look elegant."

### **Cheese Tortellini with Marinated Portabella Mushrooms, Three Color Peppers and Gunther's Roasted Garlic & Sundried Tomato Marinade**

Yield: 4 to 5 portions

#### **Ingredients**

1 pack - Fresh Cheese Tortellini - (approximately 20 ounces)  
1 pack - Portabella Mushroom - caps or strips - (approximately 6 ounces) medium dice  
9 ounces - Gunther's Roasted Garlic & Sundried Tomato Marinade  
3 ounces - Heavy Cream  
1 ounce - Olive Oil  
½ each - Red, Yellow & Green Pepper - medium dice (approximately 3 ounces)  
1/4 each - Red Onion - medium dice (approximately 3 ounces) - \*Note - medium dice is 1/3 by 1/3 by 1/3 inches  
2-3 cloves - Fresh Garlic - minced  
To Taste - Parmesan Cheese  
To Taste - Fresh Ground Black Pepper  
To Taste - Salt - kosher  
To Taste - Parsley - minced

Cook pasta al dente according to instructions on the packaging. Shock cooked pasta in cold water and drain well. Gently toss with vegetable oil and store in a sealed container in the refrigerator.

Place diced Portabells mushrooms in a zip lock baggy and marinate with 3 ounces of Gunther's Roasted Garlic & Sundried Tomato Marinade. Marinate for two hours minimum or overnight if you can - In a hot rondeau pan, or high sided saute pan - heat 1 ounce olive oil and add red, yellow, green peppers and red onions. Stirring occasionally until tender and just starting to caramelize, about three to five minutes, do not burn.

Add garlic and saute for 30 seconds to one minute or until tender. Add

marinated portabella mushrooms and saute until tender about two to four minutes. Reduce heat to medium and add Tortellini. Gently stir until heated through. Try not to break up the Tortellini.

Add the last 6 ounces of Gunther's Roasted Garlic & Sundried Tomato Marinade and heavy cream. Keep on heat until warmed through. Reduce heat to medium low and leave on to reduce sauce to a thick consistency, stirring occasionally so the Tortellini does not stick to the bottom of the pan. Check flavor and adjust with kosher salt and fresh ground black pepper if needed. Place in large bowl and garnish with fresh grated Parmesan Cheese and parsley.



### **Tomato and Feta Cheese Salad with Gunther's Lemon Oregano Marinade**

Yield: 31 ounces – approximately 5 to 6 salad portions

#### **Ingredients**

2 pints - Cherry or Grape Tomatoes - (approximately 20 ounces) - Sliced in half - length wise  
4 ounces - Feta Cheese - Crumbled into bite size pieces  
3 ounces - Red Onion - medium dice (approximately 1/3 by 1/3 by 1/3 inches)  
1 ounce - Romaine Lettuce - Rough Chop  
3 ounces - Gunther's Lemon Oregano Dressing  
To Taste - Salt- kosher  
To Taste - Fresh Ground Black Pepper

Place halved tomatoes in a mixing bowl. Gently toss with Feta Cheese, Red Onions, Romaine Lettuce and Gunther's Lemon Oregano Marinade. Season with Fresh Ground Black Pepper. Season with kosher salt if needed. (Note: Feta Cheese should contain enough sodium to satisfy the need for salt)

Refrigerate for a minimum of two hours in a plastic storage container as the acid from the tomatoes and Marinade will react adversely with an aluminum bowl and impart a metallic flavor to the dish. Serve chilled as an appetizer salad or as a side dish with your favorite Mediterranean entrée. Note - this salad is best when made a day in advance.

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