

Italian Sausage with Peppers & Portabellas

Serves 4

Nothing too complicated here with ingredients. It is the technique that brings it all together. Searing in a skillet then roasting in oven is an excellent way to keep from overcooking the sausage and since the peppers & mushrooms are done in the same skillet, none of the flavorful juices go to waste either. The sausage and peppers are just as good as a sandwich with provolone or the sausage can be sliced up and served with pasta topped with freshly grated cheese.

Ingredients:

1 lb. Italian sausage links
1 large Red bell pepper, cut into ¼ in thick strips
½ lb Portabella mushrooms, sliced ¼ in thick
2 Tbs. Olive oil
3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
2 Tbs. Red wine
2 Tbs. Cold unsalted butter
1 Tbs. Balsamic vinegar
Salt to taste
Pepper Flakes (optional)

1. Preheat oven 350F
2. Heat 1 Tbs. olive oil in oven-safe skillet over med. high heat and sear the sausage for 1-2 minutes just to brown the casing (rest of the cooking is in the oven). Remove sausage and rest on plate.
3. Add the garlic to skillet and remaining olive oil and sauté for a minute. (If using the optional pepper flakes, add now too.)
4. Turn skillet to high. Add the mushrooms, some salt, and sauté for 1-2 minutes.
5. Add the peppers, a little more salt, and sauté for another 1-2 minutes.
6. Add the balsamic vinegar and red wine and keep sautéing 1 more minute.
7. Place seared sausages (and any juices from the plate) on top of the peppers and mushrooms and put skillet in preheated oven for 15 – 20 minutes until internal sausage temp. is 155-160. DO NOT OVERCOOK.
8. Remove sausages from skillet, then sauté the remaining peppers & mushrooms on high while stirring until excess liquid is gone and you can see the bottom of the skillet and a little charring. Takes 3-4 minutes.
9. Remove from heat. Swirl in the cold butter and add sausages to warm up.
10. Taste the peppers & mushrooms for salt and add more if needed.

For Sandwiches:

1. Spoon a little of the juices from the skillet over the bread first followed by a good smear of mayo.
2. Lay in a slice of provolone or preferred cheese, a sausage and top with a mound of the peppers & mushrooms.
3. For a nice touch of freshness & brightness, top with Italian parsley or basil and a splash of balsamic vinegar.

For Pasta:

1. Cook 1 lb. of your preferred pasta in well-salted water. Drain.
2. Cut the sausage and add the slices and the peppers & mushrooms and all juices to the warm pasta.
3. If needed, add some olive oil to help fully dress the pasta.
4. Top with a flavorful grated dry cheese like pecorino Romano or parmesan.
5. For a nice touch of freshness & brightness, top with Italian parsley or basil and a drizzle of balsamic vinegar.