

# Toasted Orzo with Fennel

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by

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## Ingredients:

Fennel Bulb: 2 small-diced (2 cups)  
Butter: 2 Tablespoons  
Olive Oil: 2 Tablespoon  
White Onion: 1 small chopped (about 1 cup)  
Fennel Seed: 1 teaspoon  
Red Pepper Flakes: pinch or ¼ teaspoon  
Salt: ¾ teaspoon  
Garlic cloves: 2 clove, minced  
Orange: 1, juice of one plus the zest  
Orzo pasta: 1 pound  
Chicken or vegetable stock: 1 quart  
Fresh Parsley, chopped: ½ cup  
Black-olives/pitted: oil cured, ½ cup or green olives: oil cured ½ cup or mix  
Ground black pepper: to taste  
Pine nuts: roasted, garnish about ½ cup

**METHOD:** Trim fennel of stalks and fronds. Wash fennel bulb. Cut bulb in half lengthwise, through the root, then quarter. Slice off the core by making an angled cut, then slice lengthwise into ¼ inch wide strips, then cut each strip into ¼ inch dice.

Preheat a 12 inch skillet. Add the butter-let melt, then add the olive oil. Add the chopped onion to the skillet, diced fennel, fennel seed, red pepper flakes and the salt. Using medium-low heat, sweat the vegetables, stirring, until fennel and onion are softened-then increase heat and allow the onion and fennel to lightly brown. Add the garlic then cook until garlic begins to soften. Add all the orzo. Stir to coat the orzo in the fennel mixture and stir until the orzo begins to take a light brown color. This may take 5 to 8 minutes.

Off the heat-add the chicken stock and orange juice. Place skillet back on heat-increase heat to medium high-stirring constantly until mixture begins to boil. Add the orange zest. Reduce heat to medium low or low, place a lid on top and allow liquid to absorb and cook orzo for about 10-12 minutes.

Stir and check texture of orzo after 10-12 minutes. If al dente, remove from heat, stir in the olives, fresh parsley & fresh orange zest. Stir and taste: add black pepper as needed. Before serving: garnish with toasted pine nuts. Serves 6 as a side dish.

Recommended as an accompaniment to: grilled poultry sausage, flat bread, sautéed Kale and Swiss chard. Balance the plate with fresh, marinated cucumber /yogurt salad.

Recipe is adapted from Cook's Illustrated