

PASTA WITH SCALLOPS IN HEIRLOOM TOMATOES AND FENNEL SAUCE

(from the Bewitching Kitchen)

1 Tbsp olive oil (+ a little more for searing scallops)
1 leek, white part only, thinly sliced
1 fennel bulb, thinly sliced, fronds reserved
3 to 4 heirloom tomatoes, depending on their size
salt and pepper
1 Tbsp orange zest, divided
8 sea scallops
¼ tsp ground fennel
spaghetti, or pasta of your choice

Boil the water to cook the pasta.

Core the tomatoes and cut them in large chunks, but don't seed them. Reserve.

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil, then saute the leeks and the sliced fennel for about 5 minutes, seasoning with salt and pepper. When they are soft and starting to get some golden color, add the tomatoes and half the orange zest. Cook, stirring, until the tomatoes start to melt and release a lot of juice. Cover the pan, and keep at a simmer.

Cook the pasta, and when it's 5 minutes from being ready, heat a non-stick skillet on high heat, add olive oil just to coat the surface lightly. Pat the scallops dry, season lightly with salt, pepper and ground fennel, and sear them, 1 to 2 minutes per side.

Reserve some of the pasta water, drain the pasta and add to the tomato/fennel pan, increase the heat slightly, and let the pasta and the sauce cook for a minute or so together. If needed, add some of the pasta water to the sauce. Add the remaining orange zest, the scallops on top, and sprinkle with minced fennel fronds right before serving.