Grad's Pantry Pasta (with additions from Tinky)

Courtesy of Grad and In Our Grandmothers' Kitchens

Ingredients:

1 lb. bucatini or perciatelli (if both are available, Grad prefers the the bucatini, but both are fine)

salt to taste

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

1 small onion, diced

6 peeled garlic cloves, minced (or more)

1 red or yellow bell pepper, diced (added by Tinky)

1 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes, or more if you like things hot

3 to 4 flat anchovies packed in oil (I chopped these up)

1 6-ounce. jar marinated artichoke hearts

1 4-ounce jar sun dried tomatoes in oil

1-1/2 cups blanched asparagus pieces (added by Tinky)

2 tablespoons of oil from the tomatoes

Parmigiana-Reggino or Grana Padano cheese to taste

Instructions:

Put the pasta on to boil in boiling, salted water. Meanwhile, place olive oil in a large skillet. Saute the onion gently until soft. Add the garlic and bell pepper; cook gently until they soften as well. Try not to brown the garlic.

Add the anchovies and cook gently until they disappear into other ingredients. Sprinkle the in pepper flakes and heat them for a minute or so. Drain the artichokes, reserving the marinade. Slice them thickly, and add them to the skillet. Slice the sun dried tomatoes into thin strips, and add them to the skillet with 2 tablespoons of the oil in which they were packed. Cook gently. Stir in the asparagus pieces. Taste and sprinkle with a little salt if needed. (I just waited and added salt at the table since people like differing degrees of saltniness.)

Add a little of the artichoke marinade to the mixture. Taste and correct seasonings. Add 1 cup of pasta cooking water, and bring the mixture to a boil to reduce it slightly (at this point, Grad sometimes adds 1/2 cup of bottled clam juice or chicken broth. They are not essential, however.) When the pasta is al dente, take it out of the water with a pasta fork and add it to the skillet to finish cooking. Toss everything together with tongs. If it is needed, add a little pasta water one ladle at a time, tossing between additions, until the mixture is a nice saucy consistency. Take it off the heat, and sprinkle cheese on top.

Serves 4 to 6.