

# Braised Broccoli Antipasto

**Serves 4**

When I served this recently, one of my guests said, between bites, "Why on earth would anyone eat plain broccoli when they could eat THIS?" A better compliment I couldn't imagine; the dish is at once satisfying with its umami of olive oil, garlic and herbs, its hit of hot chile, and tiny little bursts of sweet plumped raisins, all wrapped up in the garden taste of green broccoli.

- 3 tablespoons golden raisins
- 1 pound broccoli, broken into florets
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Hot pepper flakes, to taste
- ½ teaspoon fresh thyme, or several pinches of dried herbs de Provence, or to taste

**Instructions:** Place the golden raisins in a bowl and pour hot water over them; cover and let sit while you cook the broccoli.

Cook the broccoli in boiling, salted water for about 3 minutes, or until just tender. Drain and rinse in cold water to stop further cooking.

Over medium-low heat, heat a large frying pan deep enough to fit the broccoli; add the oil and garlic. When the garlic turns golden and begins to sizzle, add the broccoli, salt and hot pepper flakes, and toss all together for several minutes.

Drain the golden raisins, reserving the soaking liquid. Add the plumped raisins, the thyme or herbs de Provence, and a few tablespoons of the soaking water to the pan. Cover and continue cooking on medium-low heat for 6 to 8 minutes, checking every so often to be sure there is liquid in the bottom of the pan; add more raisin soaking liquid if there is not.

You want the broccoli to simmer in a small amount of liquid. It will get soft and fade in color; for once you do not want it to be al dente. When it is soft, taste for seasoning, and adjust as necessary. Eat warm or cool as an antipasto.

**Per serving:** 120 calories, 4 g protein, 12 g carbohydrate, 7 g fat (1 g saturated), 0 mg cholesterol, 29 mg sodium, 3 g fiber.