



PASTA MAKING WORKSHOP

FRESH PASTA

1-cup flour

2 whole eggs

4 quarts water

1-tsp salt

Make a mound with the flour on a clean counter or cutting board. Create a well in the center of the flour so that the counter or cutting board is visible at the bottom. Make the well about 3-4-inches in diameter. Crack the eggs into the center of the well. Using a fork, break the yolks and scramble the eggs inside the well. Slowly, begin to incorporate some of the flour, working your way around the inside of the well. Continue combining flour into the egg until a dough begins to form. Now, using your hands, begin to knead the dough while still adding just enough flour so that the dough is no longer tacky or sticky. (**The humidity and the size of your eggs will greatly determine if your flour will absorb all of the flour, or your dough may even require more flour.) There may be some flour that is not used in this process. Leave the excess flour on the counter, as it will be used when it's time to roll the dough. Continue kneading the dough for 10 minutes. Kneading the dough is critical as it is creating the gluten structure needed for the consistency and texture. Form a ball with the dough and wrap with plastic wrap and set in refrigerator for at least 30 minutes to allow the dough to rest while the flour continues to hydrate. If you do not let the dough rest for at least 30 minutes, the dough will not roll or stretch properly, and will spring back. You must allow the gluten strands to relax (rest). You may also freeze your dough, to be used later. After 30 minutes, unwrap the dough and place on the counter, with the flour leftover from making the dough. Cut the dough into thirds. Use one third of the dough at a time, while keeping the remaining dough wrapped with plastic wrap to prevent it from drying out. Using a rolling pin or your palm, give the dough a few whacks to flatten it. Begin rolling the dough until you achieve your desired thickness. (Rule of thumb is that you should be able to see light and movement through the sheet of pasta when done rolling it.) Depending on your choice of noodle, you may cut your pasta with a knife or roll it through the pasta machine. Be sure to keep the pasta well-floured to prevent it from sticking to itself.

At this point, you can portion your noodles and freeze them, store them in the refrigerator until ready to use, or continue to the next step to cook them. If cooking the entire batch of pasta, bring 4 quarts of water to a boil over medium-high heat. Add 1-tsp. salt to the water; stir to combine. Drop the noodles into the water and stir gently so the noodles do not stick to the bottom of the pan or to themselves. Allow to cook only 3 minutes. Take a noodle out the boiling water and taste it. It should have a bit of a 'chew' to it (al dente). Al dente translates to 'to the tooth' meaning it has a bit of chew or resistance. Before draining the pasta, remove 1-cup of the pasta cooking water, as you may want to add it to your sauce. This starchy salty water can be used in your sauce to thicken or loosen the consistency of it. Drain the pasta in a colander in the sink or in a bowl under the colander. Do not rinse the pasta, as the starch will help your sauce stick to it. Serve pasta with your favorite sauce.

'NOT SO CLASSIC' ALFREDO SAUCE

1-cup cream
1 garlic clove, crushed
1-cup grated Parmesan cheese
1-tsp. flour
Dash of grated fresh nutmeg
Cracked black pepper to taste

Combine the flour with the parmesan cheese, stir until combined. In a medium saucepan, add crushed garlic and cream over medium-low heat. Once the garlic cream begins to bubble around the edges of the pan, slowly add the cheese/flour mixture while whisking constantly. Reduce heat to low. Simmer for about five minutes, while continuing to whisk. Add black pepper and nutmeg, continue to whisk. Simmer for another 5 minutes then serve with your choice of pasta. Starchy pasta cooking water may be added to loosen or tighten the sauce.

QUICK BOLOGNESE SAUCE

1-pound ground beef
¼-cup minced onion (fresh or dry)
½-cup dry red wine
¼-tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
1 can 15-ounce crushed tomatoes
1-tsp. sugar (to balance the acidity of the tomatoes)
½-tsp. dry oregano
¼-tsp. dry basil leaves
1-tsp. chopped fresh garlic
1/8-tsp. "Garlic & Herb Sea Salt" (from www.eastcoastsaltcompany.com)

In a medium-size saucepan, add the ground beef over medium heat. Stir ground beef and break it up into smaller pieces while it cooks. Once the ground beef is no longer pink, add the wine, garlic, salt, chili flakes, sugar, basil, oregano, and onion. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer sauce until the wine is completely evaporated. (This step mimics the long cooking time of a traditional Bolognese sauce by allowing the acid of the red wine to tenderize the beef. It also intensifies the red wine by evaporated the water.) Once all the wine is evaporated (you will still see fat and juices from the ground beef, but the reddish color of the wine will be gone from the bottom of the pan), add the crushed tomatoes. Stir and simmer for 20-30 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.

A few other sauces you might like:

PESTO

3-cups fresh basil leaves
1-cup pine nuts, chopped walnuts or almonds (optional)
4 garlic cloves, peeled
¼-cup grated Parmesan cheese
1-cup good olive oil

cracked black pepper to taste

In a food processor, blend together the basil leaves, nuts, garlic, and cheese. While still mixing, slowly drizzle the olive oil in to emulsify the pesto. Stir in black pepper to taste. Store in refrigerator for 2 weeks.

PUTTANESCA SAUCE

¼-cup olive oil

4 garlic cloves, smashed

4 anchovy fillets, optional

1-can (28-oz.) diced tomatoes

½-cup Kalamata olives, pitted

¼-cup capers, drained

½-tsp. crushed red pepper flakes

1-pound spaghetti pasta

2 TBSP. salt (for pasta cooking water)

Chopped fresh parsley for garnish

Freshly grated Parmesan cheese for garnish

In a large skillet or pot, add oil and garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add optional anchovies, stir, and cook for one minute. Add tomatoes, olives, capers, and red pepper flakes. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add salt; stir. Add spaghetti and cook two minutes less than the package directions. Remove pasta from boiling water and add directly into sauce. The starchy wet noodles will be beneficial to the sauce. Add ¼ -½-cup of pasta cooking water to adjust the sauce if you want it looser and thinner in consistency. Toss spaghetti in the sauce and sprinkle with parsley and Parmesan cheese before serving.