

PA
IL PRIMO PIATTO

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GIOVANNI D'APICE

MARCO PAONE

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ANTONIO CARLUCCIO

My motto has always been 'MOF MOF:', minimum of fuss, maximum of flavour. Which explains why I've never found it easy to accept a plate of pasta created by cuisine luminaries, seeking to demonstrate their mastery of colour contrasts, textures, flavours and complex ingredients with eye-catching, minimalist portions. It's very interesting from a research point of view to discover new aspects about pasta, but the fact remains that a delicious plate of pasta has to be a dish you long for, and of which you want to taste more than a forkful. I hope that this exceptional book can bring new ideas on how to use pasta, while maintaining the required balance of beauty, practicality and substance. It is difficult to create pure simplicity with a plate of trenette al pesto, embellished with the top leaves of wonderful basil.

With kind regards

Antonio Carluccio, († 8 November 2017)

MY MOTTO
'MOF MOF':
MINIMUM
OF FUSS,
MAXIMUM
OF
FLAVOUR

Antonio Carluccio

'ITALIANS HAVE ONLY TWO THINGS ON THEIR MIND: THE OTHER IS SPAGHETTI.'

Catharine Deneuve

The data speaks for itself. Pasta is much more than a myth: one Italian in two eats pasta every day, both emigrants and those who have remained at home.

Thus, no matter where they are, for Italians pasta is their daily food, it is their 'new bread'. And there are many reasons for this.

Firstly, pasta represents the quintessential idea of bringing people together: a practical choice if you believe that food is to be shared rather than just eaten. Think about it: you can have a meal ready in a few minutes, and if the typical packet is 500 grams, then it's designed to be shared rather than eaten alone. (Even if some brands are noticing that people are eating more by themselves and are selling also smaller-sized packages).

Pasta is the popular food par excellence. Even in its simplest form it is liked by everyone, women and men of all ages and social classes. And its price makes it accessible to whoever wants it.

Pasta comes to life when it cooked and drained, when tastes and creativity are added, depending on the season or personal preferences. Pasta is the most versatile dish that exists. It can be served hot or cold, combined with different vegetables, meats and fish, and comes in different shapes, each ideal for specific sauces.

As the Mediterranean diet teaches us, varying one's choice of ingredients is the foundation of any good diet. At this point, let's take a minute to dispel a myth: pasta does not make you fat. In fact, according to the experts, half of your daily macronutrient energy intake should come from a food like pasta. It's a complex, slow-release carbohydrate, which doesn't spike your blood sugars or give you nasty sugar crashes. With a slower digestion rate, you feel fuller for longer.

My recommendation is to eat it al dente.









PASTA

At the time when a new Italian identity was slowly coming to the boil, pasta cooking was not so much a physical deed as a symbolic act. Pasta was first and foremost a concept in the minds of Italians who felt the need to feel Italian. That Italian identity had not always existed; in fact, it was formed while the water was boiling. Before we come to the end of this story, the current popularity of pasta, let me take you on an interesting journey: one that opens up new perspectives. A trip to other places and other times, in which pasta was still a side dish and not a first main course. By looking at the same dish from different angles, a unique and exciting kaleidoscope will emerge with unexpected reflections.

Pasta already existed in Roman days, but in those days it was called lagana. Water and flour were kneaded and rolled out into a large slab of dough and then cut into broad strips (of more or less the same size as the pasta that is still eaten under this name in southern

Italy). These strips were then boiled in water or bouillon, sometimes even in milk, and flavoured with cheese and herbs. In the Middle Ages, pasta starts to become a more common food in different variations, long or short, fresh or dried, but is still a side dish. Initially, pasta was eaten mainly with meat or eggs, although it would seem there were two different forms of use, depending on the social class to which one belonged: in aristocratic circles it was a side dish, while for the (poor) people it was often the main meal.

DRIED FOR THE DESERT

Dried pasta was invented by the Arabs. The drying technique made it possible to preserve the pasta for a long time, which was practical during their travels through the desert. Without falling into unnecessary historical digressions, it is therefore not surprising that Sicily was the first Italian region where the pasta form was used, because in the course of time Roman and Arab cultures merged here. Pasta is the child of this

**'PASTA COOKING
WAS NOT SO MUCH A PHYSICAL DEED
AS A SYMBOLIC ACT.'**

Giulia Ubaldi, food anthropologist

Mediterranean fusion, which in this time of Islamophobia should make us realize how related we in fact were (and are), starting with the dinner table.

Pasta's status began to change in the seventeenth century when the overpopulated city of Naples – remembered in Italian history for the revolt led by Neapolitan fisherman Masaniello in 1647 against its Hapsburg-Spanish rulers – was struck by a food crisis, with meat particularly scarce. And meat was the most consumed food, along with 'leaves', or vegetables like cabbage and lettuce, which gave the Neapolitans the nickname 'leaf-eaters', a stereotype that would quickly turn into *maccheroni* eaters.

In order to cope with the dizzying population growth, pasta penetrated into all layers of society, including the poorest, thanks in part to the introduction of the mechanical press that made it possible to produce *maccheroni* and other pasta forms more cheaply.

MACCHERONI AS A SYMBOL

By the eighteenth century, pasta was firmly ensconced. In 1787, the writer Goethe was stunned at the ubiquity of *maccheroni* in Naples, and at its cheapness. In response to the population growth and, just as in the Middle Ages, prepared with only some cheese and herbs, *maccheroni* became the symbol of a city.

**ARTUSI: FROM SIDE DISH TO
MAIN COURSE**

It was only with the unification of Italy in the nineteenth century that pasta grew, outside of Naples, into the symbol of Italian identity. And for that we have to give a respectful bow to Pellegrino Artusi, the founder of Italian cuisine. Not only because – at a time when the Italians needed to feel Italian – he collected recipes from all over Italy and brought them together in the most important standard work on Italian cuisine, *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene* (*Science in the kitchen and the art of eating well*), but especially because he created the pasta tradition.

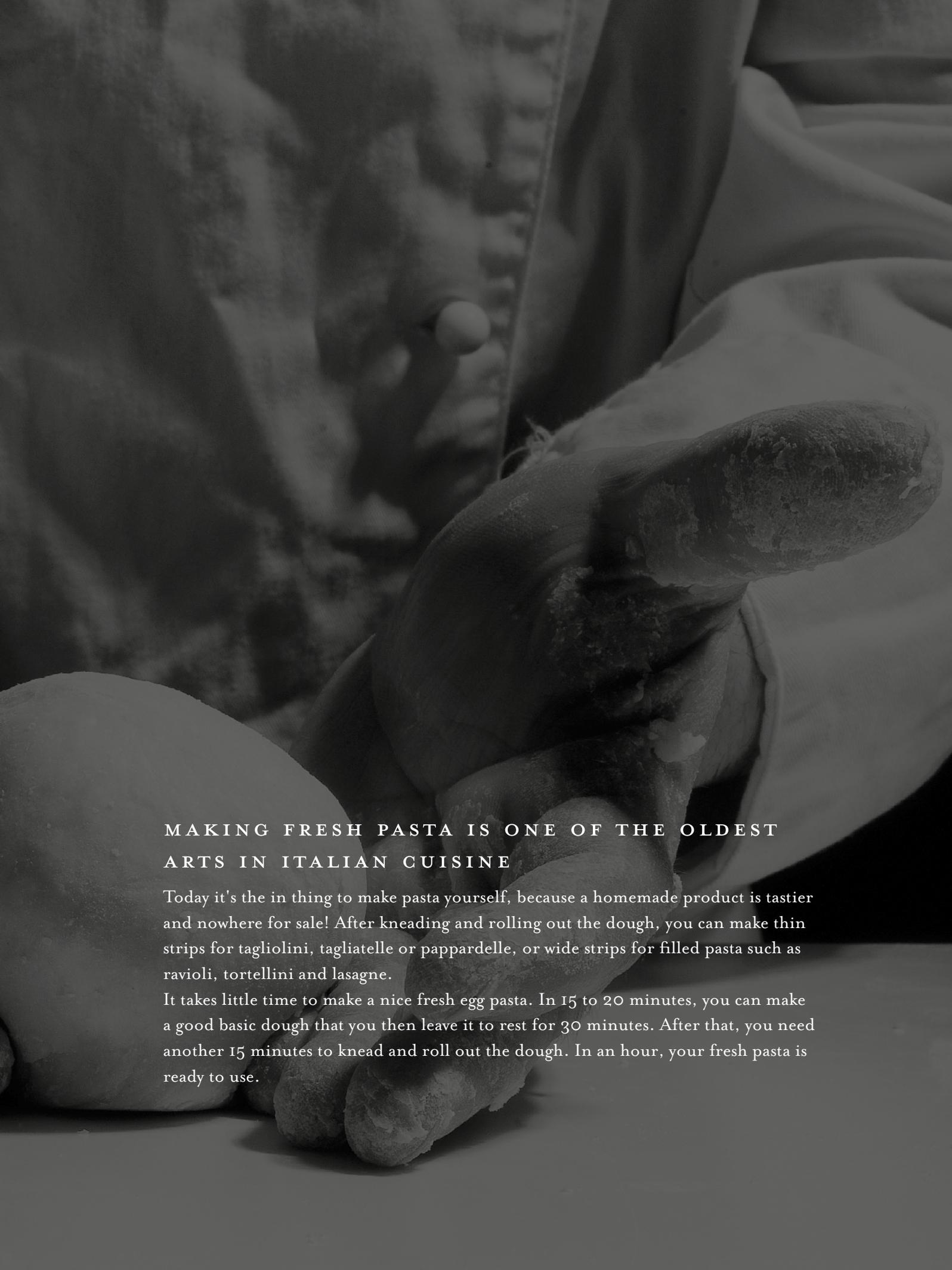


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**MAKING FRESH PASTA IS ONE OF THE OLDEST
ARTS IN ITALIAN CUISINE**

Today it's the in thing to make pasta yourself, because a homemade product is tastier and nowhere for sale! After kneading and rolling out the dough, you can make thin strips for tagliolini, tagliatelle or pappardelle, or wide strips for filled pasta such as ravioli, tortellini and lasagne.

It takes little time to make a nice fresh egg pasta. In 15 to 20 minutes, you can make a good basic dough that you then leave it to rest for 30 minutes. After that, you need another 15 minutes to knead and roll out the dough. In an hour, your fresh pasta is ready to use.

BASIC INGREDIENTS

If you want to make pasta at home, there are some basic rules you need to observe. To begin with, you need to know which is the right flour.

PASTA

You've decided to serve pasta, but this time you want to do everything, from start to finish, with your own hands. It's not difficult, but the key question is: which flour are you going to choose? Every pasta needs its own particular flour.

First, you have to respect your own taste. If you like fine pasta, white flour is the best. If you prefer a rustic taste, then add some wholegrain wheat flour. If, in place of farina 00 (soft white wheat flour) you use wholegrain wheat flour, which is rich in proteins and fibre, you get a healthier meal.

For the classic basic fresh pasta recipe, white wheat flour and egg are used - 400 grams (14 oz) of flour with 4 eggs for 4 people. With this, for example, one can make tagliatelle, lasagne and stuffed pastas.

Fresh pasta with flour and water, without egg, requires a pinch of salt. The water must be at room temperature for better hydration of the starch. Examples of this egg-free pasta are: cavatelli, orecchiette, bucatini, fusilli, strozzapreti.

FEELING WITH YOUR HANDS

Practice and more practice is the only way to get a good pasta. The size of the eggs and the power of the flour then become the variables. The Italian *nonne* who prepared pasta daily felt with their hands what was missing in the dough. For every pasta, you must let the dough rest for at least 15 minutes after preparation and use a wooden worktop to obtain the best substance.

EXPERIMENT WITH FLOUR

Special pastas require different flours. Pizzoccheri della Valtellina is, for example, a pasta made from buckwheat flour that is cooked with cabbage and potatoes and seasoned with bitto (old, very traditional cheese from the Valtellina mountain area). You can replace this special flour with maize flour or chestnut flour.

The amount? Always 400 grams (14 oz) of flour, in this case 200 grams (7 oz) of farina 00 (soft white wheat flour) and 200 grams (7 oz) of another flour of your choice.



MAKING THE DOUGH

TO SERVE 4 PREPARATION

400G (14 OZ)
FARINA 00 DI GRANO
DURO
4 ORGANIC EGGS
(70G (2.5 OZ))

For the fresh egg pasta, put a little under 400 grams (14 oz) of flour in a bowl (keep a small portion aside to add later).

Make a well in the middle. Beat the eggs and put them in the well. Work in the flour with a fork or with your fingertips.

When the liquid part is absorbed, start kneading the pasta. Use a wooden board or wooden worktop and work the pasta for about 10 minutes with the palm of your hand, pulling on all sides. Take care not to break the dough, keep it elastic. If the dough is too soft, add a little flour, and if it is too dry, add some water by wetting your hands.

Once the dough is firm and smooth, form a ball and wrap it in cling film. Leave the ball to rest at room temperature for 30 minutes.

After leaving to rest, cut a piece off the ball, put the rest back in the cling film or wrap it in a tea towel so that it does not dry out.

Dust the ball with some flour and pass it three or four times through the pasta machine* at the widest position. Then dust the dough again with some flour, fold it double and roll it out again. Then roll it out thinner and thinner.

When the two sides of the rolled-out pasta feel leathery and do not stick together when you press them together, they are ready to cut tagliatelle, lasagne, etc.

* If you want to use the traditional method instead of a pasta machine, you have to roll out the fresh pasta with a long kitchen roller. This calls for lots of patience.

STORAGE

You can freeze the fresh pasta in the various shapes. Take a large bowl, divide the pasta into pieces with space between them and leave to harden for a few hours in the freezer. Once the pasta is hard, put portions in freezer bags and return them to the freezer.

When you want to use them, you take them directly from the freezer, place them in boiling water and continue the recipe.



<https://www.lannoopublishers.com/en/pasta-video-en>



FUSILLI CON TONNO

FUSILLI WITH TUNA

TO SERVE 4 PREPARATION

400G (14 OZ) FUSILLI
1 MEDIUM ONION
3 TABLESPOONS
OLIVE OIL
150G (5.3 OZ) TINNED
TUNA
SALT AND PEPPER
1 HANDFUL BASIL
LEAVES
1 TABLESPOON CAPERS

Cook the fusilli until al dente in a large pot of salted water.

In the meantime, chop the onion and fry it lightly in olive oil in a frying pan. Remove the tuna with a fork and add to the onion. Season with salt and pepper to taste and simmer for 10 minutes on a low heat. Tear the basil leaves into pieces and add together with 1 tablespoon of capers.

Drain the fusilli and mix into the tuna.



MACCHERONI ALLA CAPRESE

MACCHERONI FROM CAPRI

TO SERVE 4 PREPARATION

400G (14 OZ)
MACCHERONI
4 TABLESPOONS
OLIVE OIL
1 GARLIC CLOVE,
CRUSHED
500G (1 LBS 1.6 OZ)
TOMATOES, CANNED
(OF GOOD QUALITY,
PREFERABLY
SAN MARZANO)
SALT AND PEPPER
A FEW SPRIGS
OF FRESH OREGANO
BUTTER
200G (7 OZ) BUFFALO
MOZZARELLA, DICED
30G (1.1 OZ) GRATED
PARMESAN

Heat 4 tablespoons of olive oil in an earthenware or cast iron saucepan and fry a crushed garlic clove in it. Remove the garlic when it turns brown.

Cut the tomatoes coarsely and add them with salt, pepper and the oregano to the pan. Leave to simmer for 15 minutes.

In the meantime, bring a large pot of salted water to the boil, and cook the maccheroni until al dente.

Preheat the oven to 230°C (446°F). Grease a large oven dish with butter.

Drain the pasta and transfer to the buttered dish. Spoon the tomato sauce over it and distribute the mozzarella cubes on top. Sprinkle with parmesan and place the dish in the preheated oven for 5-6 minutes. Serve immediately.



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