



The Golden Book of
PASTA

McRAE BOOKS

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NOTE TO OUR READERS

Eating eggs or egg whites that are not completely cooked poses the possibility of salmonella food poisoning. The risk is greater for pregnant women, the elderly, the very young, and persons with impaired immune systems. If you are concerned about salmonella, you can use reconstituted powdered egg whites or pasteurized eggs.

The level of difficulty for each recipe is given on a scale from 1 (easy) to 3 (complicated).

CONTENTS

Introduction	14
Types of Pasta	24
Serving Pasta	34
Short Pasta	40
Long Pasta	136
Fresh Pasta	232
Stuffed Pasta	328
Baked Pasta	424
Noodles	520
Index	598

FRESH PASTA



FETTUCCINE WITH SPICY CHICKEN SAUCE



134

If using homemade pasta, prepare the fettuccine following the instructions on pages 16–25. • To prepare the sauce, put the chicken in a large bowl and dust with the paprika, curry powder, and salt. • Heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Add the carrot, celery, and onion and sauté until the onion is transparent, 3–4 minutes. • Add the chicken and sauté until browned all over, 5–7 minutes. • Add the wine and let it evaporate. Add the tomatoes and mix well. • Cover and simmer over low heat for 25 minutes, adding a little stock if the sauce dries out. Stir in the lemon juice and season with salt and pepper. • Cook the pasta in a large pot of salted boiling water until al dente, 4–5 minutes. Drain, reserving 2 tablespoons of cooking liquid. Toss with the sauce over high heat for 1 minute. Add the reserved cooking liquid and toss again. Sprinkle with basil and serve hot.

■ ■ ■ *This is a versatile sauce that can be served with all types of pasta—short, long, dried, fresh, filled, or baked—and with many other dishes too. It is a traditional recipe from the Campania region around Naples, in southern Italy, where it is made with the local San Marzano tomatoes. These oval shaped “meaty” tomatoes have few seeds and a strong, sweet flavor, making them ideal for sauces.*

- 14 ounces (400 g) fresh , homemade fettuccine (see pages 16–25), or store-bought**
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, thinly sliced**
- 1 tablespoon spicy paprika**
- 1 tablespoon curry powder**
- Salt**
- ¼ cup (60 ml) extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 carrot, finely chopped**
- 1 stalk celery, finely chopped**
- 1 onion, finely chopped**
- ½ cup (125 ml) dry white wine**
- 1 pound (500 g) tomatoes, peeled and chopped**
- ½ cup (60 ml) vegetable stock**
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 tablespoons fresh basil**

Serves: 4–6
Preparation: 20 minutes
Cooking: 50 minutes
Level: 1



■ PREPARING FRESH PASTA DOUGH



Plain fresh pasta is made of a simple mixture of flour and eggs. For 4 people, you will need 22/3 cups (400 g) of all-purpose (plain) flour and four very fresh large eggs. Fresh pasta can also be colored or flavored with spinach or tomato purée, cocoa, herbs, or chiles, or can be made with whole-



1. SIFT the flour onto a clean work surface and shape into a mound. Make a hollow in the center.



2. USE a fork to beat the eggs lightly in a small bowl. Pour the beaten eggs into the center of the mound of flour.



3. USE the fork to incorporate the eggs into the flour. Take care not to break the wall of flour or the eggs will run.



4. WHEN almost all the flour has been absorbed, use your hands and a pasta scraper to gather the dough up into a ball.



5. KNEAD by pushing down and forward on the pasta with the heel of your palm. Fold in half, give a quarter-turn, and repeat.



6. AFTER 10–15 minutes, it will be smooth and silky, with tiny air bubbles on the surface. Let rest for 30 minutes.

■ ROLLING AND CUTTING FRESH PASTA DOUGH



If making simple ribbon pasta, such as tagliatelle, run all the sheets of pasta through the machine one notch at a time. This will give them time to dry a little before being rolled to the next thickness. If making stuffed pasta, such as ravioli, roll the pasta one sheet at a time to the thinnest setting before



1. DIVIDE the dough into six pieces (for 14 ounces /400 g of pasta, enough for four people).



2. ROLL a piece of dough at the thickest setting. Continue rolling, reducing the thickness one notch at a time.



3. THE SHEETS should be evenly shaped. Long sheets are hard to manage; keep at about 12–14 inches (30–35 cm).



4. SPRINKLE the sheets with semolina and cover with a clean dry cloth. Let dry a little before you begin to cut them.



5. TEST to see if ready to cut: insert your index finger into a fold of pasta and pull slightly. If it tears, it is ready.



6. SET the machine to the width required and run each sheet through. Gather the pasta up and shape into “nests.”

PAPPARDELLE WITH MEAT SAUCE

Fresh Pasta Dough (see the step-by-step instructions on pages 158–159): Sift the flour onto a clean work surface and make a well in the center. Break the eggs into the well and mix in to make a smooth dough. Knead for 10–15 minutes until smooth and elastic. Shape the dough into a ball, wrap in a clean kitchen towel, and let rest at room temperature for 30 minutes. • Roll out the pasta and cut into pappardelle, about 1 inch (2.5 cm) wide.

Meat Sauce: Heat the oil and butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the pancetta, onion, carrot, celery, and garlic and sauté until the vegetables have softened, about 5 minutes. • Add the beef and sauté until browned, about 5 minutes. Pour in the wine and simmer until evaporated, 2–3 minutes. • Mix in the tomato paste, and beef stock. Season with salt and pepper. Return to a boil, then cover and simmer over very low heat for about 2½ hours, stirring from time to time. Add more stock if the sauce starts to dry out. • Cook the pasta in a large pot of salted boiling water until al dente, 3–4 minutes. • Drain and transfer to a warmed serving bowl. Add the sauce and toss well. • Serve hot with the Parmesan cheese.

■ ■ ■ *This is a very good, basic meat sauce. You can serve it with all kinds of pasta, including long, short, fresh, and filled. The important thing is to simmer the sauce for at least two hours; the longer the better.*

Fresh Pasta Dough

- 2²/₃ cups (400 g) all-purpose (plain) flour
- 4 large eggs

Meat Sauce

- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 4 ounces (125 g) pancetta, coarsely chopped
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 carrot, finely chopped
- 1 stalk celery, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 pound (500 g) ground (minced) beef
- ½ cup (125 ml) dry white wine
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste (concentrate)
- ½ cup (125 ml) Beef Stock + extra as required (see pages 62–63)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Freshly grated Parmesan cheese to serve

Serves: 4

Preparation: 20 minutes
+ 1 hour for the pasta

Cooking: 2 hours 45 minutes

Level: 2



HOMEMADE SPAGHETTI WITH TUSCAN GARLIC SAUCE



140

To prepare the pasta dough, mound the flour and salt up on a wooden work surface and make a well in the center. Add enough water to make a firm dough. Knead until smooth and elastic, 15–20 minutes. Set aside for 30 minutes. • Break off pieces of dough and roll them into thick spaghetti about 8 inches (20 cm) long. Leave to dry covered with a cloth for at least 1 hour. • To prepare the garlic sauce, pour the oil into a large frying pan over medium heat. Add the garlic and sauté until pale gold, 3–4 minutes. • Add the tomatoes and red pepper flakes and season with salt. Partially cover the pan and simmer over low heat until the garlic has almost dissolved into the sauce, about 45 minutes. Season with salt. • Cook the pasta in a large pot of salted boiling water until al dente, 3–4 minutes. • Drain well and place in a heated serving bowl. Add the sauce, tossing gently. • Serve hot.

Pasta Dough

2²/₃ cups (350 g) all-purpose (plain) flour
½ teaspoon salt
Lukewarm water

Sauce

5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
10 cloves garlic, lightly crushed, but whole
2 pounds (1 kg) tomatoes, peeled and finely chopped
½ teaspoon dried red pepper flakes
Salt

Serves: 4

Preparation: 30 minutes
+ time for the pasta

Cooking: 25–30 minutes

Level: 2



RUOTE WITH PESTO & CHERRY TOMATOES

Toast the pine nuts in a large frying pan over medium heat until lightly browned, about 3 minutes. Set aside. • Toast the almonds in a large frying pan over medium heat until lightly browned, about 3 minutes. • Purée the garlic and basil in a food processor until smooth. Add the almonds and pecorino and blend until smooth. Season with salt and pepper. • Gradually add the oil, blending continuously, until the pesto is thick and smooth.

• Meanwhile, cook the pasta in a large pot of salted boiling water until al dente. Drain well, reserving 2 tablespoons of the cooking liquid. • Add the reserved cooking liquid to the pesto and mix well. Combine the pesto, tomatoes, pine nuts, and pasta in a large serving bowl and toss well. Garnish with basil and serve hot.

¼ cup (40 g) pine nuts

½ cup (75 g) blanched almonds

4 cloves garlic

1 bunch basil + extra leaves, to garnish

⅓ cup (50 g) freshly grated pecorino

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

⅓ cup (90 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

1 pound (500 g) ruote (wagon wheels)

1 pound (500 g) cherry tomatoes, cut in half

Serves: 4

**Preparation: 30 minutes
+ time for the pasta**

Cooking: About 2 hours

Level: 3

■■■ *Ruote, or “wagon wheels” as they are known in English, are a good short pasta shape to use when there is plenty of oily sauce as they soak it up and catch it in their many openings.*



TAGLIATELLE WITH EGGPLANT SAUCE

If using homemade pasta, prepare the tagliatelle following the instructions on pages 158–160. The tagliatelle should be cut about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (1 cm) wide.

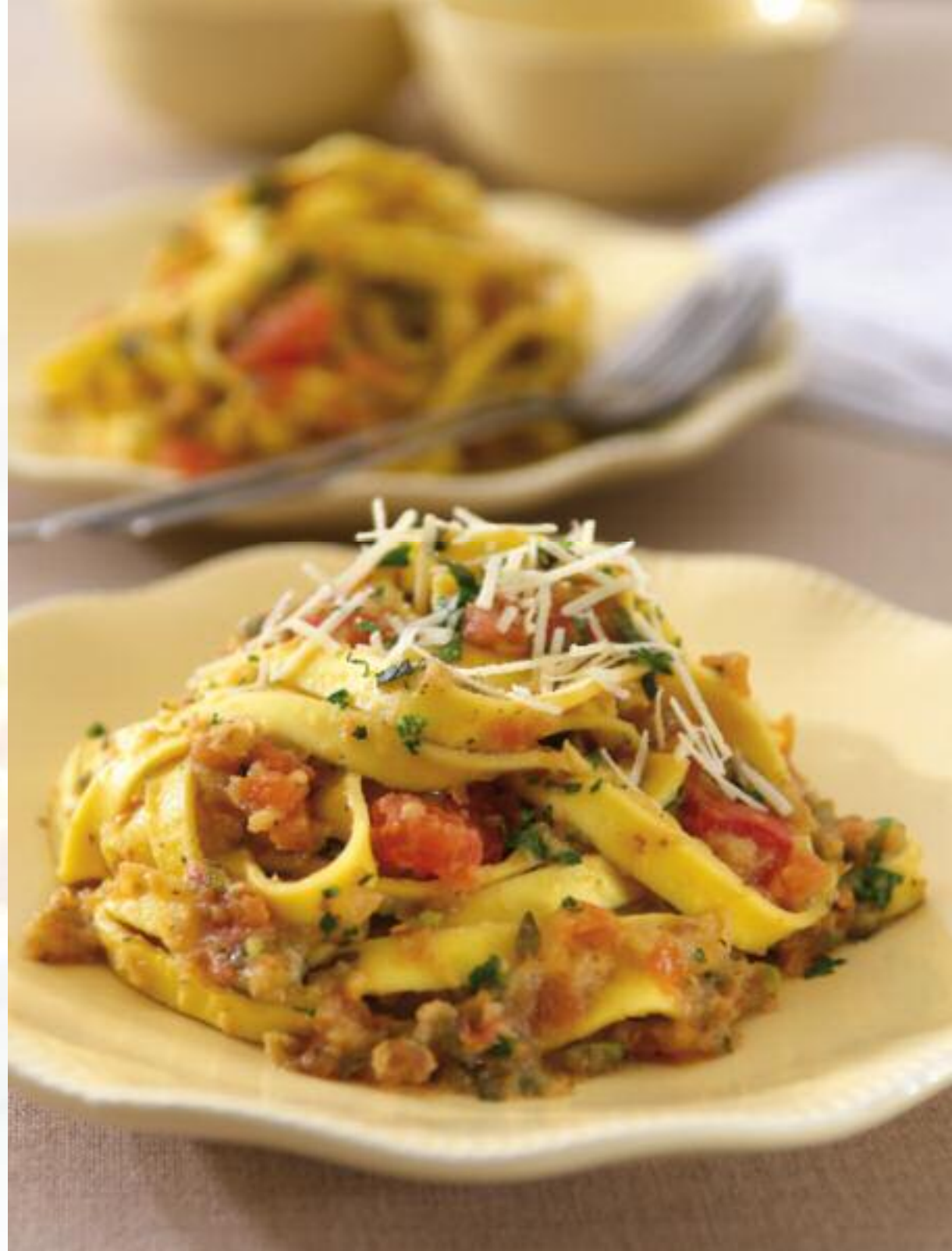
Eggplant Sauce: Bring a large pan of lightly salted water to a boil. Add the eggplant and simmer for 4 minutes. Drain well, squeezing out any excess moisture. • Heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Add the garlic and thyme and sauté for 2 minutes. Add the eggplant and cook for 6–7 minutes, mashing gently with a fork. • Remove from the heat, add 1 tablespoon of the basil, and season with salt and pepper. • Transfer to a food processor and chop until smooth. • Return the eggplant sauce to the pan and add the tomatoes. Cook until the tomatoes have broken down and the sauce is creamy, 5–10 minutes. • Meanwhile, cook the pasta in a large pot of salted boiling water until al dente, 3–4 minutes. • Drain well, reserving 1–2 tablespoons of cooking water. Add the pasta and reserved water to the pan with the sauce. Sprinkle with the cheese and remaining basil, and toss gently. • Serve hot.

- 1 recipe tagliatelle (see pages 158–160) or 14 ounces (400 g) fresh store-bought tagliatelle

Eggplant Sauce

- 3 medium eggplant (aubergines) peeled and chopped into small cubes
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (90 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh thyme
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil
- Salt and freshly ground white pepper
- 3 large tomatoes, peeled and chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (60 g) freshly grated pecorino cheese

Serves: 4
Preparation: 20 minutes
+ time for the pasta
Cooking: 20–25 minutes
Level: 2



RAVIOLI WITH SALMON & DILL FILLING

Filling: Put the beef in a bowl with the wine. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for 12 hours.

Pasta: Prepare the pasta dough. Let rest for 30 minutes at room temperature. • Drain the beef, reserving the marinade. • Heat 2 tablespoons of butter in a medium saucepan over high heat. Add the beef and sauté until browned, about 5 minutes. • Add the marinade and bring to a simmer. Season with salt. Cover and simmer over low heat, turning occasionally, for 1 hour. Add the stock if it starts to dry. • Remove from the heat. Reserve the cooking juices. • Chop the beef and ham finely in a food processor. • Stir in the Parmesan, eggs, and nutmeg. • Bring the milk to a boil. Add the rice and simmer until tender, 15–20 minutes. Drain and add to the meat. • Melt 2 tablespoons of butter over medium heat. Sauté the sausage, cabbage, garlic, and parsley for 5 minutes. Add to the meat. • Divide the pasta into 6 equal pieces. • **Step 1:** Roll through a pasta machine down to the thinnest setting. Alternatively, roll out by hand on a floured work surface to paper thin. • **Step 2:** Cut into 5-inch (10-cm) wide strips and put heaped teaspoons of filling along one edge, about 2 inches (5 cm) apart. Fold the pasta over and seal. Press down between the blobs of filling with your fingers to remove pockets of air. • **Step 3:** Use a fluted pastry wheel to cut out the agnolotti. • Cook in batches in a large pot of salted boiling water until al dente, 3–4 minutes. • Use a slotted spoon to transfer to a serving dish. • Melt the remaining 8 tablespoons (120 g) of butter with the cooking juices and rosemary. • Drizzle over the pasta. Sprinkle with Parmesan and serve hot.

Filling

- 12 ounces (350 g) stew beef, cut into chunks
- 1½ cups (375 ml) dry red wine
- 12 tablespoons (180 g) butter
- Salt
- 1 cup (250 ml) Beef Stock (see page 62–63)
- 5 ounces (150 g) ham
- ½ cup (60 g) freshly grated Parmesan cheese + extra to serve
- 2 large eggs
- ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 cup (250 ml) milk
- ½ cup (100 g) rice
- 4 ounces (120 g) Italian sausage meat, crumbled
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley
- 1 recipe Fresh Pasta Dough (see pages 158–160)

Handful fresh rosemary sprigs, to serve

Serves: 4–6
Preparation: 2 hours + 30 minutes to rest
Cooking: 2 hours + 12 hours to marinate
Level: 3

ASSEMBLING THE RAVIOLI



Agnolotti are a type of square stuffed pasta from the northern Italian region of Piedmont. They usually have meat fillings (traditionally what was leftover from roasts). Most ravioli are square, although they can also be half-moon shaped or round, depending on where they come from. Ravioli can have meat, seafood,



1. ROLL each piece of dough through the pasta machine to the thinnest setting. Alternatively, roll the dough out on a lightly floured work surface until paper thin.



2. CUT the dough in 5-inch (10-cm) wide strips. Put heaped teaspoons of filling along one edge, about 2 inches (5 cm) apart. Fold the pasta over and seal the edge. Press down between the blobs of filling with your fingers to remove pockets of air.



3. USE a fluted pastry wheel to cut out the agnolotti. Place on a floured clean cloth in a single layer until ready to cook.

