

Appetite for Knowledge



FRESH PASTA!

Just one bite of fresh pasta and you may never want to buy premade pasta again. Homemade pasta is something everyone should make at least once in their lifetime. Whether you want to knead, roll, and cut the dough by hand, or use a stand mixer to mix and a roller to flatten and cut, remember these essential homemade pasta tips and tricks!

1. REMEMBER BASIC RATIO FOR INGREDIENTS

As a general rule, the pasta dough ratio is three parts flour to two parts eggs to one part water by weight. If you don't have a scale, use 1 cup of flour and two eggs per serving. There are variations on this, many depending on if you also want to add water or oil, the type of flour, and if you want to add additional yolks to the mix for a richer dough.

The best flour for pasta is a bit subjective. Many chefs believe a combination of 00 flour and semolina flour make for a perfect dough that isn't hard and not too soft either. 00 flour is a very finely ground, high-protein flour made from durum wheat. Semolina flour looks like cornmeal, but it's made from wheat.

2. TRADITIONAL MIXING IS BEST

The traditional way of making dough from scratch – with a well of flour, and the eggs and salt in the middle and using a fork to draw the flour slowly into the liquid – ensures the perfect amount of flour gets added before kneading into a nice ball of dough.

3. IF YOU ARE SHORT ON TIME...

For those who prefer to use stand mixers, hold back a bit of the flour and only add it when the dough is too sticky or add a spoonful or two of water if the dough is too dry.



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4. GET A FEEL OF THE DOUGH

Making pasta from scratch is more about a feeling, rather than measurements. Depending on the humidity, the flour, the size of the eggs, you may need more or less flour for proper consistency, so getting a feel for the dough is essential.

5. PASTA DOUGH NEEDS TO BE KNEADED

Once the dough is mixed, it's all about the kneading. It will take up to 10 minutes to transform the shaggy mix into a smooth and elastic ball. The dough is ready when there is elasticity. To test, stick your knuckle into the dough. It should slowly push back. If you create an indentation and the dough just stays, you need to continue kneading.

6. REST THE DOUGH

A little forethought here is key because you'll want to let the dough relax for at least an hour before proceeding. This is what allows the gluten to form, which will give your pasta the chew it needs. This will make it smoother and easier to deal with when rolling it out.

7. ROLL IT OUT

No matter what tool you use to roll out the dough, remember to have some extra flour nearby to make sure the pasta does not stick to the countertops or to itself. Lightly dust the pasta as you work.

8. SALT THE COOKING WATER

Pasta water should be salted to taste like the ocean because that is going to flavor the noodles. Use 3 tablespoons of salt per 4

PASTA DOUGH

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups 00 flour
- 1/2 cup semolina flour
- 6 eggs yolks from large eggs
- 4 tablespoons water
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Preparation

1. If making by hand:
 - Mix flours together on a clean, flat work surface.
 - Create a well in the middle of the flours, leaving the edges mounded up. Crack the eggs and add the yolks into the well. Add the salt and water to the well. With a fork, slowly whisk the wet ingredients. Gently incorporate the flour into the egg mixture a little at a time. Keep whisking until you work the wet ingredients into the dry, then continue mixing with your hands.
 - Work dough into a ball, then knead the dough for 8 to 10 minutes. The easiest kneading method is to push down and away from you with the palm of your hand. Then turn the dough ninety degrees, fold the dough over on itself and push down and away again. The tackiness will go away and the pasta should become silky.
2. If using a stand mixer:
 - Combine flours, eggs yolks, water, and salt in stand mixer bowl. Knead on medium speed with a dough hook.
3. If dough is too sticky, sprinkle on additional Semolina until it comes together. If dough is too dry, sprinkle water until you get the right consistency. You'll want to knead until the dough is elastic. Slice into the dough with a paring knife; if you see lots of air bubbles, keep kneading. The dough is kneaded when it forms a smooth elastic ball and has very few air bubbles when cut. Test by pressing your knuckle into the dough; if it starts to bounce back then it's ready.
4. Wrap dough in plastic wrap or in a covered bowl and let rest for at least 30 minutes. Ideally, let the dough rest for 4 hours before rolling.
5. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the pasta to desired thickness and cut as desired. Alternatively, cut into small chunks, flour, and roll through pasta roller.



quarts of boiling water. Add in the fresh pasta, and then immediately begin to stir it gently so that the noodles do not stick together. Continue to cook until the pasta rises to the surface and is al dente. This should take two or three minutes. Then strain the fresh pasta and immediately use it.

9. NEVER RINSE THE PASTA!

If you rinse pasta after cooking, you rinse off the starch adhering to the noodles. The starch helps the sauce cling to the noodle.

10. STORE PASTA IF YOU'RE NOT COOKING IT RIGHT AWAY

If waiting to cook the pasta, divide it into portions, dust with a little bit of flour to keep the noodles

from sticking together, and then make nest-like bundles on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Cover with a clean kitchen towel and set aside until ready. Fresh pasta can also be frozen for future meals. Frozen pasta should be cooked directly from the freezer.

If you've ever tasted fresh pasta, you probably don't need any convincing. The firm, toothsome bite and rich, eggy flavor are pretty much irresistible. When you tell your friends you made the pasta from scratch, you are sure to get plenty of oohs and aahs.



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