



# PASTA HOUSE RECIPES and COOKING TIPS



## TIPS ON COOKING PASTA

In order for pasta to be perfect, it must be cooked properly. The size of the pot and amount of water that is used is very important to make pasta successful. Use seven quarts of water for one pound of pasta. Cook in a very deep pot, so the pasta has enough room to swim around without the strands bumping into each other. Add two tablespoons of salt after the water is fully boiling and just before you add the pasta. Salting the water early on will produce a bitter odor and flavor.

A special note:

**KEEP PASTA FROZEN UNTIL READY TO ADD TO BOILING WATER!**

After you have added salt, keep the water boiling and gently add the pasta. Push down the pasta with a wooden fork until it is completely covered with the water. Be sure to stir occasionally which will eliminate having to add oil to the cooking water. Meanwhile, heat your sauce so that it will be ready when the pasta is cooked.

How long you cook pasta depends on the size of pasta you are cooking. Cooking time can be from 3 to 10 minutes from the time the pasta is added to the boiling water. You must test and test again. When cooked, pasta should be firm and not chewy. When cooking pasta for pasta salad always cook your pasta 'al dente', (firm to the tooth), and cool with cold water immediately to stop it from cooking. When using fresh lasagna sheets it is recommended to cook a few sheets at a time for about two minutes and also cooling in cold water to allow you to handle the lasagna sheets. Do not cut your sheets until after they are cooked for fresh pasta will expand about 30% after cooking.

As soon as the pasta is al dente, drain it decisively, all at once. Don't let the pasta stand in the water, and don't rinse the pasta after cooking. Have your colander ready. When the pasta has finished cooking the best method to remove it from the pot is to fork it out or to use a slotted spoon for large shaped pasta. A quicker method is to pour the pasta into a colander.

Allow the colander to rest briefly, or shake it once or twice, but don't wait too long - you want a little moisture to cling to the pasta to help keep them from sticking together, then very quickly into a bowl to prepare with sauce.

If you require to keep cooked pasta aside for a short time before preparing with sauce, cook "al dente" and simply add olive or vegetable oil, toss and let sit until ready to use.

Always sauce immediately and lightly. If you are using Romano or Parmesan cheese you can do it now and toss to coat every strand. This will give the cheese a very creamy texture. Next add the sauce again. Don't over sauce. Use just enough to coat all the pasta. When it comes to cheese, some prefer to sprinkle cheese just on top and not mix it in - you choose.

So many people really haven't explored the world of pasta at all. There are so many different kinds and so many different ways to enjoy it. You could serve two different pasta dishes a day without repeating them all year long!

Pasta dishes have been a specialty of Italian cooking since the 1200's. Now they are popular throughout the world! Pasta is good for you and the many different types and shapes allow us to make hundreds of different pasta dishes. Try some for yourself!

ENJOY!!

