

Basic Pasta: Fettuccine or Linguine

Season: All

Serves: 30 tastes in the classroom or 6 at home

Fresh from the garden: eggs

Fettuccine means 'little ribbons', so for fettuccine, cut the pasta by hand into strands about 1–1.5 cm wide. Linguine is slightly thinner and can be cut using the widest cutter of your pasta machine.

Equipment:

metric measuring scales and spoons
mixing bowls – 1 large, 1 small
plastic wrap
clean tea towels
cook's knife
chopping board
pasta machine with noodle cutter attachment
pastry brush
large saucepan
pasta claw or tongs
colander
serving dish

Ingredients:

400 g plain flour, plus extra for dusting *use strong flour*
2 tsp salt, plus extra for the cooking water
4 eggs (70 g eggs)

What to do:

To make and rest the dough:

1. Combine the flour and the salt in the large bowl and then create a well in the middle of the flour.
2. Crack the eggs into the small bowl and then pour them into the well in the centre of the flour.
3. Use your hands to incorporate the eggs into the flour until the dough clings together and feels quite springy.
4. Tip the dough onto a clean, dry workbench. Knead the dough for a few minutes. Wrap it in plastic wrap and let it rest for up to an hour at room temperature.

To roll the dough:

1. Set up the pasta machine next to a clean dry space on your workbench. You can also spread clean tea towels next to the rollers to catch the pasta on.
2. Unwrap the dough and cut it into six pieces. Keep one piece out and fold the others back in the plastic wrap to stay moist.

Basic Pasta: Fettuccine or Linguine continued

1. Roll the dough into a ball and press it down on the board. Flatten and shape it into a rectangle about 8 cm wide.
2. Pass the dough through the widest setting of the pasta machine.
3. Fold the dough into three, then turn it 90 degrees and roll it through again. Do this three or four times, folding as necessary to keep the edges from getting too ragged. (This process is called 'laminating'.)
4. Set the rollers to the next widest setting and pass the pasta through.
5. Continue changing the settings and passing the lengths of dough through until the dough has passed through the second thinnest setting.
6. If the dough starts to stick, sprinkle a pinch of flour onto your hands and smooth it onto the strips of dough. Be very sparing with the flour.
7. If the dough gets too long, you can cut it into two or three pieces, and then roll each piece separately.
8. For linguine, you will use the cutter to cut your pasta sheets. Attach the linguine cutter and run each pasta sheet through it, gathering all the strands as you go.
9. For fettuccine you will need to use a knife to hand cut the pasta sheets into thick strands. Lay the sheet out and sprinkle it with flour. Then, starting at the short end, roll up the sheet into a sausage.
10. Now cut the strands. Using the cook's knife, slice along the length of the roll every 1 to 1.5 cm. Unravel each strand and toss it in flour.
11. Let your pasta dry on the tea towels while you work on each of the remaining pieces of dough. If you need to pile up layers, make sure you place a clean tea towel between any layers of pasta, or they might turn into a sticky mass!
12. Clean the pasta machine by brushing it with a dry pastry brush. Tip it upside down to get any dried bits of pasta out. **Never** wash your pasta machine with water as the rollers will rust.
13. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil over a high heat and add a generous pinch of salt, your pasta water should be like salty sea water.
14. Drop in your pasta. It should only take 5 minutes to cook.
15. As soon as the fettuccine or linguine is ready, drain it, give it a big shake then tip it into your serving dish. Your pasta is now ready for its sauce.

