

Fresh Pasta Dough

serves 6

This recipe is for pasta made using a mechanical rolling machine; it's the way many Italians make their pasta. The traditional, though slowly dying art of rolling the dough with a long, long rolling pin that is handed down from mother to daughter through the generations, is a skill that is most often learned by watching someone hundreds of times. The mechanical method produces a great pasta.

**2 c. unbleached all purpose white
flour**
4 eggs
1/4 tsp. salt

Scoop the flour out onto a counter into a mound and make a well in the center of the mound. Break the eggs into the well and beat them lightly with a fork. Begin to pull some of the flour into the well of eggs using the fork. Working your way around the inside diameter of the well, pull more and more flour into the eggs. Continue around the circle until most of the flour is incorporated into the eggs and it is a thick mass. Now let your hands touch the dough directly. Knead the dough a little bit and incorporate more of the flour if it is still sticky. Continue until the dough no longer feels sticky. Scrape all the flour away from your work area and begin kneading. Knead 8-10 minutes, until the dough feels silky and smooth. Set aside, place a towel over the dough, and let it rest for 10 minutes.

Cut the dough into 6 pieces. Shape each piece into a rectangle. Place one in front of you and set the others aside, covered with a towel. Flatten the piece into a larger rectangle. Open your pasta machine to the widest opening. Feed the dough through. Repeat 2-3 times until the dough feels smooth. Then move the roller to the next setting and repeat. Repeat until you have run the dough through the thinnest setting. Set aside to dry a little and repeat with the other 5.

Now go back to your first section that has dried the longest and proceed with whatever pasta you are making: fettuccine, ravioli, spaghetti, etc... If you are making long cut noodles, run them through the pasta machine using the appropriate cut. Loosely pile them on the towel to dry for 10-15 minutes. Fluff every couple of minutes to prevent sticking. For filled pastas, use the whole sheet, make mounds of filling every couple of inches on the bottom half, fold the top half over, tuck the pasta around the mounds, press to seal the edges, and cut with a fluted pastry wheel or with a knife and then seal the edges with fork tines.

Cook, sauce, enjoy! You've just made pasta the way generations of Italians have done it. Life's simple pleasures.