

## 5 Spaghetti alla carbonara

This recipe is adapted from Marcella Hazan's "The Second Classic Italian cookbook" (though I have made only very slight changes to her recipe). It calls for a combination of pecorino romano and parmesan cheeses. Pecorino is a sharp, hard sheep's milk cheese. If you can't get hold of it, the recipe works fine with a little extra parmesan.

Serves 3 generously as a main course.

### *Ingredients*

210g pancetta cubes  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
15g butter  
4 cloves garlic, peeled and lightly crushed (using the back of a knife not a garlic crusher- important as garlic needs to be removed from pan in one piece)  
4 tablespoons dry white vermouth  
salt for the pasta cooking water  
345g spaghetti (we use wholewheat – as a rule of thumb use 75g-115g dried pasta per person)  
3 eggs  
25g freshly grated pecorino romano cheese (see note above)  
60g freshly grated parmesan cheese  
black pepper  
2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley (optional)

1. Put the oil, butter and crushed garlic into a saucepan or small frying pan and turn on the heat to medium high. When the garlic turns a deep gold, remove and discard it.
2. Add the pancetta cubes to the pan, turn the heat down to medium, and sauté until the fat renders (melts) and it begins to turn crisp at the edges. This will take 5-10 minutes.
3. Add the vermouth and let it boil for a minute or two then turn off the heat.
4. Bring a large pan of water to the boil, add salt (use about 1 tsp salt per litre water as a rule of thumb) and when the water returns to the boil, put in the spaghetti and cook as per the pack instructions.
5. Take a large bowl from which you will serve the spaghetti later and break the 3 eggs into it. Beat them lightly with a fork or balloon whisk then mix into them all the grated cheese, plenty of freshly ground black pepper and the chopped parsley if using.
6. To check if the spaghetti is ready, test a strand by biting it – it should be tender without a chalky hard core in the centre but still a little bit firm to the bite. This is what is meant by the phrase *al dente*. When the spaghetti is ready, drain it and add it to the serving bowl containing the egg and cheese mixture. Straightaway, toss rapidly and thoroughly until all the strands are thoroughly coated.
7. Quickly reheat the pancetta mixture over a high heat and pour the entire contents of the pan over the spaghetti. Toss again thoroughly and serve straightaway into warmed bowls or plates.