

# Food

Light, colorful, nutritious and delicious.....

## Versatile Pasta Makes Perfect Springtime Fare

Pasta is the Italian word for "paste", which in culinary usage describes an alimentary paste made from semolina and water. Semolina is the purified midlings of hard wheat, the best being durum, or macaroni, wheat, grown in this country in the western north-central states, chiefly Minnesota. Durum wheat is heavy with gluten, the principal protein component of wheat and other grains.

In Italy, the country with which pasta and pasta dishes are most closely associated, there are more than 100 varieties, some large to be stuffed, like lasagna, others in small decorative shapes, like stars, hearts, animals, and letters, for example.

There are also colored pastas. Spinach, broccoli, beet juice and tomatoes are used to produce green and red pastas, and eggs to make bright yellow pastas.

Here are some pasta recipes which make tasty springtime eating.

### PASTA PRIMAVERA

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
- 1 medium onion
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 1 pound thin asparagus, tough ends trimmed, cut diagonally into 1/4-inch slices, tips left intact
- 1/2 pound mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 6 ounces cauliflower, broken into small florets

- 1 medium zucchini, cut into 1/4-inch rounds
- 1 small carrot, halved lengthwise, cut diagonally into 1/8-inch slices

- 1 cup whipping cream
- 1/2 cup chicken stock
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil or 2 teaspoons dried
- 1 cup frozen tiny pears, thawed, or 1 cup fresh young peas
- 2 ounces prosciutto or cooked ham, chopped
- 5 green onions, chopped
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

- 1 pound fettuce or linguine, cooked al dente, thoroughly drained
- 1 cup freshly grated imported Parmesan cheese

Heat wok or large deep skillet over medium-high heat. Add butter, onion and garlic and saute until onion is softened, about 2 minutes. Mix in asparagus, mushrooms, cauliflower, zucchini and carrots and stir-fry 2 minutes. (At this point, remove several pieces of asparagus tips, mushrooms and zucchini and reserve for garnish.)

Increase heat to high. Add cream, stock and basil and allow mixture to boil until liquid is slightly reduced, about 3 minutes. Stir in peas, ham and green onions and cook 1 minute more. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Add pasta and cheese, tossing until thoroughly combined and pasta is heated through. Turn onto large serving platter and garnish with any reserved vegetables. Serve immediately. For a variation, add 1 pound cooked, shelled shrimp with the pea-ham mixture.

Makes 4 to 6 main-course servings or 6 to 8 first-course servings.

### SPRINGTIME PASTA DINNER

- 6 ounces green spaghetti, cooked al dente and drained
- 6 ounces yellow spaghetti, cooked al dente and drained
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 cups cooked ham, cubed
- 2 cups zucchini, sliced
- 2 cups tomatoes, chopped
- Basil, salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh grated Parmesan cheese

Heat olive oil in wok or large skillet. Stir-fry ham, zucchini, and tomatoes in hot oil until zucchini is barely tender. Add basil, salt and pepper. Add green and yellow spaghetti and toss together lightly to blend all ingredients. Heat thoroughly and serve immediately, topped with the Parmesan cheese. Makes 6 servings.

### PORK STROGANOFF WITH SPINACH NOODLES

- 1 pound well-trimmed boneless pork shoulder, cut in 2-inch-long x 1/2-inch-wide strips
- 1 1/2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons margarine
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 package (1 1/4 ounces) stroganoff mix
- 3/4 cup water
- 2 medium-size carrots cut in 2-inch-long matchsticks
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions
- 1 can (4 ounces) mushroom stems and pieces, drained
- 1/2 cup dairy sour cream
- 8 ounces spinach (green) noodles, freshly cooked and drained

Coat pork with flour, shaking off excess. Melt margarine in a 3-quart saucepan over medium-high heat. Add pork and brown. Stir in thyme, the mix and water until smooth; bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 30 minutes or until meat is almost tender. Add carrots, green onions and mushrooms. Cover and cook 10 minutes longer or until meat and carrots are tender. Remove from heat; stir in sour cream. Serve on hot noodles.

### SUMMER SALAD

- 1 pkg. (12 oz.) Prince Rotini Primavera
- 3 cups chicken, cooked and cubed
- 1 large green pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 cup celery, thinly sliced
- 1 cup pimento-stuffed olives, thinly sliced
- 1 cup radishes, thinly sliced
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, cubed
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- Salt and pepper to taste

Cook Rotini in 4 qts. boiling salted water for 10 to 12 minutes. Do not overcook Rotini. Drain. Rinse with cold water. Drain again. In a large bowl combine Rotini and remaining ingredients. Mix well. Chill several hours or overnight before serving. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

noodles, tomato, ham, minutes or until hot, stirring pepperoni and olives. Heat, occasionally. Stir in cheese. covered, on HIGH. 4 to 6. Makes 4 servings.

## MICROWAVE BASICS

### Pasta Now

Pasta should be pronto! But it's no news to many cooks that pasta is not a timesaver in the microwave oven. Microwave and conventional cooking times for dried pasta are almost the same. Until now that put Italy's favorite meal out of the question for cooks in a hurry.

The Banquet Foods test Kitchens have developed the recipe Pasta Pronto to solve that dilemma. The recipe's main ingredient is frozen prepared parsleyed noodles in butter sauce. This product is versatile enough to be served as a side dish or can be combined with a few ingredients to make a main dish. Now, in less than ten minutes, a pasta meal can be pronto even in the microwave oven.

### Pasta Pronto

- 4 packages (4 oz. ea.) Banquet Side Dish For One, Parsleyed Noodles in Light Butter Sauce, thawed
- 1 medium tomato, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 2 1/2 oz. fully-cooked ham, chopped (about 1/2 cup)
- 2 oz. pepperoni, chopped (about 1/2 cup)
- 1/4 cup sliced ripe olives
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

In 1 1/2-quart microwave-safe baking dish, combine

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