

Stephanie's Simple Pasta Sauces

There are probably thousands of sauces for pasta; many are very similar. Some are found only in one region of Italy. The following should be seen as just a starting point: a few ideas you can experiment with to learn about flavour combinations and quantities.

Note that the pasta is the predominant part of the dish, NOT the sauce. In Italy just enough sauce will be served to moisten and flavour each mouthful. It is never intended that there should be a great mound of sauce as is sometimes served in Australia, especially with bolognese sauce.

Some sauces are traditionally associated with just one type of pasta (pesto with spaghetti). I have not attempted to match sauce ideas with pasta varieties. Perhaps students can think about what kind of sauces would go best with different varieties of pasta.

Note: EVOO = (Australian) extra-virgin olive oil. You just need enough to give your pasta a fine coat; the dish shouldn't be dripping with oil.

Raw sauces:

- Pesto
- Chopped raw tomato mixed with torn basil, salt, pepper and mixed with EVOO (needs to sit in bowl for 5–15 minutes before being spooned onto hot pasta)
- Chopped garlic, parsley, grated parmesan and EVOO
- Chopped olives, capers and parsley with chopped tomato and EVOO

Seafood sauces:

- Steamed mussels, parsley, chopped tomato and EVOO
- Steamed clams (pipis), parsley, chopped tomato and EVOO
- Crushed anchovies with parsley, chopped tomato and mascarpone
- Sautéed sardines tossed with cooked chopped fennel, pine nuts and currants
- Prawns sautéed with basil leaves, chilli and chilli oil

Cooked sauces:

- Heat cream, butter, lemon zest, pepper and parmesan
- Nut-brown butter and crisped sage leaves
- Chopped pancetta or bacon crisped with pine nuts, garlic, parsley and EVOO
- Chopped sautéed greens (silverbeet, beet leaves, rapini) with garlic, anchovies and EVOO
- Sautéed grated zucchini, lemon zest, toasted breadcrumbs, garlic and EVOO
- Bolognese sauce
- Cooked tomatoes, garlic, red onion and EVOO
- Eggplant chopped into 2 cm cubes, fried gently until really soft, scooped into a bowl and tossed with plenty of parsley, plus a finely chopped clove of garlic and EVOO
- Roasted sweet peppers, skinned and torn into strips, mixed with EVOO