

# Pasta Carbonara



Carbonara is an Italian pasta dish that I have always wanted to master and while it has the most simple of ingredients, the method of getting it right is quite tricky. The traditional method uses eggs to create a rich sauce without the addition of cream, which is often the norm for people of Non Italian descent and while the addition of cream is still delicious, it adds unwanted calories and is really not 'Carbonara'. The problem with using only eggs is that there is a fine line between creating a silky sauce and actually scrambling the eggs but this can easily be avoided by following a few simple steps. Believe me, I have attempted this on a couple of occasions and have scrambled the eggs and although it tastes ok, it is not that pleasant in a textural sense. This time however, I did a load of research and watched a few videos by the experts and the end result was exactly what I set out to achieve. Silky ribbons of pasta in a creamy sauce, infused with smokey pancetta and a hint of garlic. The parsley on top is not traditional, and the addition of garlic is debatable but there is absolutely no denying that this was a delicious meal, a bowl packed full of flavour and rustic simplicity.

I made the pasta from scratch for this recipe. To do this I added 4 eggs to 400gms of flour, combined it in a bowl and kneaded for a few minutes. I shaped it into a ball and wrapped it in cling wrap and placed it in the fridge for half an hour before rolling it out, using my pasta machine and then cutting it by hand. Normal dried pasta is completely fine and on any normal day, I would use it too. I just happened to have pasta dough leftover from a meal I made a few days earlier.

**Prep time: 10 Minutes**

**Cooking time: 15 Minutes (at most)**

**\$ Low Budget**

**Serves 4**

400gm of spaghetti, linguine or fettucine (or 500gm if you have big eaters)

3 eggs + 1 egg yolk

200gm of diced pancetta

1 clove of garlic, sliced

A handful of grated pecorino or parmesan

Cracked black pepper, lots of it

A few sprigs of Italian parsley, stalks removed and finely chopped

Extra parmesan to serve

Extra virgin olive oil for drizzling

To make the Carbonara, bring a large pot of salted water to the boil and cook your pasta according to packet instructions. You want your pasta to have a little bite to it as it will cook further in the sauce. You also want the pancetta to be ready about the same time as the pasta. This dish is all about the timing.

Place your eggs in a mixing bowl with the grated pecorino and a generous amount of cracked black pepper and whisk until well combined.

Heat a frypan and add a little oil. Fry the pancetta until golden, then add the garlic and fry for about 30 seconds, until aromatic.

Use a pair of tongs to add the spaghetti to the pan along with about a quarter of a cup of the starchy pasta water and toss well to combine. Remove from the heat and when the pan stops sizzling (this is important as you don't want the pan too hot), add a tablespoon of the pasta water to the eggs, give it a quick whisk and pour the eggs into the spaghetti. Use the tongs to toss the pasta through the eggs, off the heat, so that the eggs don't scramble.

The eggs will cook in the residual pan heat and will create a silky sauce that will coat the pasta. Add more pasta water if needed as the sauce should be nice and loose.

Divide the Carbonara between four serving bowls and top with extra grated parmesan or pecorino, chopped parsley and sprinkle over more cracked pepper. Serve immediately.