

Classic Pasta Carbonara

Authentic Italian Pasta Carbonara recipe with pancetta, eggs, and cheese. Learn the traditional technique for creamy carbonara sauce in just 30 minutes.

15 min

PREP

15 min

COOK

30 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Medium

DIFFICULTY

Classic Pasta Carbonara

Ingredients

- 50 g unsalted butter
- 350 g pasta
- 3 egg
- 50 g parmesan cheese
- 2 clove garlic
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch black pepper

Instructions

- 1 Prepare ingredients**

Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil over high heat. Finely grate 50g Pecorino Romano cheese and set aside. Crack 3 eggs into a large mixing bowl.
- 2** Cut 50g pancetta into small 5mm dice. Peel and crush 2 garlic cloves with the flat side of your knife, leaving them in large pieces for easy removal later.
- 3 Make egg mixture**

Whisk the 3 eggs thoroughly in the large bowl. Add the grated 50g Pecorino Romano cheese and 1 pinch of black pepper, whisking until well combined. Set aside.
- 4 Cook pasta**

Add 1 pinch of salt to the boiling water. Add 350g spaghetti and cook according to package directions until al dente, about 10-12 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 5 Cook pancetta**

While pasta cooks, heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add the diced 50g pancetta and cook for 3-4 minutes, stirring frequently, until it begins to render its fat.
- 6** Add the crushed 2 garlic cloves to the pancetta. Continue cooking for 2-3 minutes more until the pancetta is golden brown and crispy. Remove and discard the garlic pieces.
- 7 Combine pasta and pancetta**

Reserve 1 cup of the pasta cooking water, then drain the spaghetti. Immediately add the hot drained pasta to the skillet with the pancetta

and toss to combine. Remove the skillet from heat.

8 **Create carbonara sauce**

Working quickly, pour the egg and cheese mixture over the hot pasta while tossing vigorously with tongs. The residual heat will cook the eggs into a creamy sauce without scrambling them.

9 Add 2-3 tablespoons of the reserved pasta water and continue tossing until the sauce coats each strand of pasta smoothly. Add more pasta water 1 tablespoon at a time if the sauce seems too thick.

10 Taste and adjust seasoning with additional salt and black pepper if needed. Serve immediately in warmed bowls, topped with extra grated cheese and freshly cracked black pepper.

Tips

Use room temperature eggs: Cold eggs are more likely to scramble when mixed with hot pasta. Remove eggs from the refrigerator 30 minutes before cooking to ensure they blend smoothly with the other ingredients.

Save pasta water strategically: Reserve at least one cup of starchy pasta cooking water before draining. This liquid gold is essential for achieving the perfect sauce consistency and helps bind all ingredients together.

Master the tempering technique: Gradually whisk hot pasta water into the beaten egg and cheese mixture before adding to the pasta. This slowly raises the temperature of the eggs, preventing them from scrambling when combined with the hot pasta.

Work off the heat: Always remove the pan from the burner before adding the egg mixture. The residual heat from the pasta and pan is sufficient to create the creamy sauce without overcooking the eggs.

Choose quality cheese: Invest in authentic Pecorino Romano and freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano. Pre-grated cheese often contains anti-caking agents that prevent smooth melting and can make the sauce grainy.

Cook pancetta until crispy: Properly rendered pancetta should be golden brown and crispy. This adds textural contrast and ensures the fat is fully rendered, which helps create a more flavorful base for the sauce.

Time the pasta perfectly: Cook pasta just until al dente, as it will continue cooking slightly when tossed with the hot pancetta and sauce. Overcooked pasta won't hold the sauce as well.

Serve immediately: Carbonara waits for no one. Have your serving bowls warmed and ready, and bring the dish to the table as soon as it's finished. The sauce begins to set as it cools, so timing is crucial for the best texture.