



Culinary Institute
of America

A Taste of Italy

Pasta, Antipasto, Italian
Meats and Cheeses



Learning Objectives

- List the various fresh egg pasta preparation methods and give examples of each.
- Describe the process to make fresh egg pasta including equipment, ingredients, and method.
- Define “antipasto”.
- List the different components included in a traditional antipasto.
- Identify a variety of Italian meats based on production methods, flavors, and textures.
- Explain the production standards for prosciutto di Parma.
- Identify a variety of Italian cheeses based on age, flavors, and textures.
- Prepare a variety of dishes representative of Italian cuisine using standardized recipes.

Fresh Egg Pasta

A type of pasta made from a simple dough of flour, eggs, salt, and oil if desired

Why Make Fresh Egg Pasta?

- Flavor and Texture
 - The eggs add richness and silkiness
- Versatility in shapes
- Quick cooking time
- Handcrafted tradition
 - Ingrained in Italian culture as an art form, techniques passed down through generations



Preparation Methods

Rolled: Thin sheets for ribbons, layering (*fettuccine*)

Hand-Cut: Handmade, unique shapes, textures (*orecchiette*)

Stuffed: Filled with cheese, meat, vegetables (*ravioli*)

Shaped/Pressed: Molded with hands, tools (*gnocchi*)

Extruded: Shaped into tubes, spirals to hold sauces (*bucatini*)



Cooking Equipment

Clean, flat workspace

Large mixing bowl: to combine ingredients

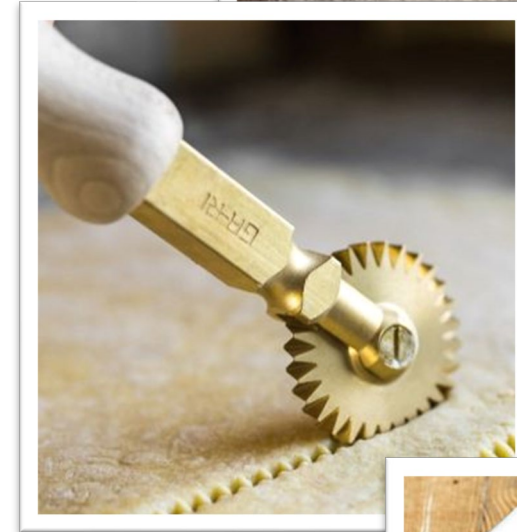
Rolling pin: to roll dough to an even thickness

Flour: to prevent dough from sticking to the workspace

Pasta cutter, machine: to cut dough into shapes

Large pot: for boiling

Slotted spoon, spider: to remove pasta from pot



Ingredients

Durum Flour

- High protein content
- Creates a strong, elastic dough that holds its shape well when cooked

Eggs

- Used to bind the dough
- Creates a rich, tender texture

Olive Oil

- Adds smoothness, flavor

Salt

- A pinch, enhances the flavor



Pasta Method

1. For the dough, in a food processor, combine the flour and salt. Add the eggs and oil, if using. Process the mixture until it resembles a coarse meal. When pressed, the dough should form a cohesive mass.
2. Turn the dough out onto a work surface. Knead until the dough is very firm, yet pliable. Cover and let the dough relax at room temperature for at least 1 hour.



Pasta Method

3. Roll the dough into thin sheets. Cut them into desired shape by hand or using a pasta machine.
4. To cook, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta. Stir to separate the strands or shapes. Cook the pasta until it is *al dente*, then drain in a colander.



Antipasto

Traditional Italian appetizer

- Variety of flavors, textures, ingredients
- Served as a platter or small portions

Cured Meats: Prosciutto, salami, mortadella, capicola

Cheeses: Mozzarella, Parmigiano-Reggiano, pecorino, ricotta

Vegetables: Roasted peppers, olives, sun-dried tomatoes, and marinated eggplant, mushrooms, artichokes

Breads: Crostini, focaccia, grissini (breadsticks)

Seafood: Anchovies, smoked salmon, marinated octopus



Salami

Covers a wide range of salt-cured, air-dried, smoked preparations

Seasonings: salt, pepper, garlic, fennel seeds, paprika, wine/vinegar

Three basic types: fresh, dry-aged, precooked

Two types of casings:

- Natural: bladder, intestines
- Artificial: animal skins, cellulose, polyvinyl



Prosciutto di Parma



Dry-cured ham (hind legs of pigs) from the Parma region.

Process:

- Salted, rested for 2 weeks
- Washed of salt, hung to dry
- Air dried for 12-36 months to naturally develop flavor.

Seasoning: Salt

Consorzio del Prosciutto de Parm

- Safeguards, protects, controls the process for quality

Prosciutto di Parma Standards

Acceptable breeds: Large White, Landrace, Duroc

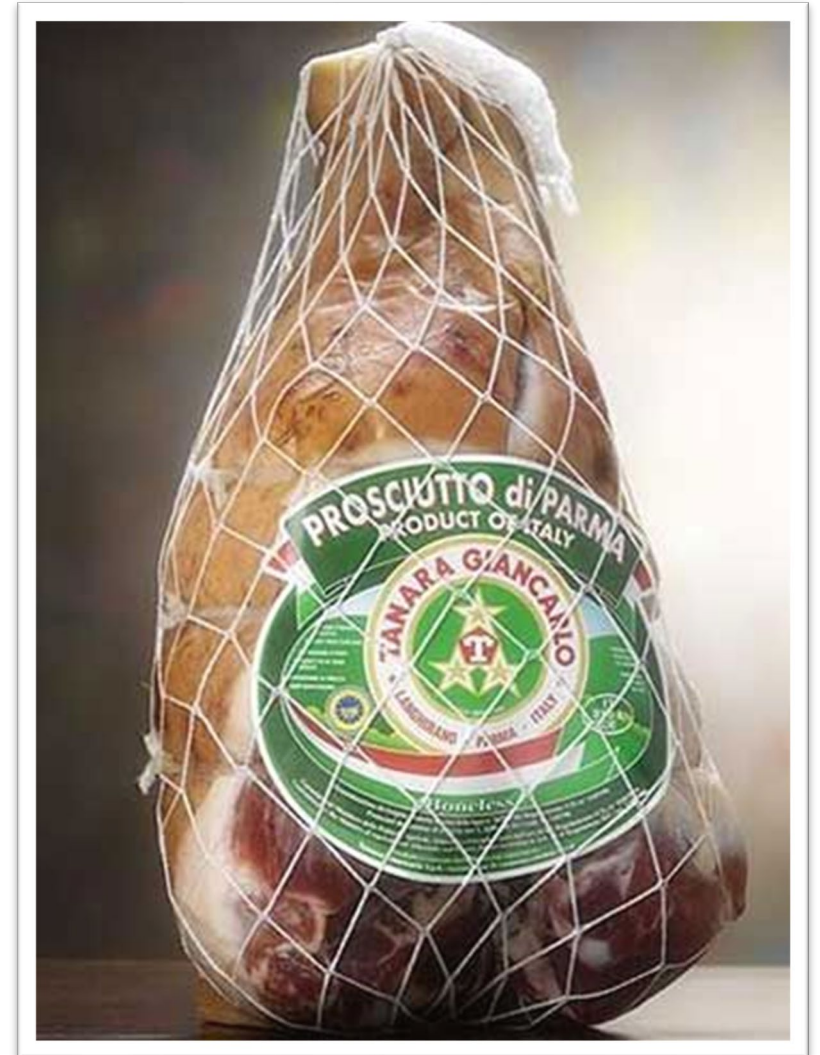
Age requirement: 9 months old

Weight requirement: 352 – 440lbs

Special diet: grains and whey from Parmigiano-Reggiano

Upbringing:

- Raised in Emilia Romagna, Lombardy, Piedmont, Veneto, Tuscany, Umbria, Marche, or Lazio
- Must spend 4 months on the Po River Plain



Coppa



Traditional Italian cold cut made from pork shoulder, neck

Process: dry-cured, seasoned with an array of aromatic spices

Flavor profile: slightly sweet, savory, peppery

Spices: fennel, coriander, anise, black pepper, garlic, paprika



Mortadella

Cured sausage made from high quality, finely ground, lean and fatty pork

Texture: smooth, buttery texture, small cubes of fat

Process: finely ground pork stuffed into casings, then slow-cooked and cooled

Flavor profile: rich, savory, slightly sweet

Spices, additives: black pepper, garlic, myrtle, nutmeg, pistachios (optional)



Capicola

Dry-cured meat made from the pork shoulder or neck

Texture: tender, melt in your mouth

Process: cured for weeks, tied into a compact shape, hung to dry for several months, aged

Flavor profile: rich, savory, slightly spicy, hint of sweetness

Spices: salt, black pepper, garlic, paprika, fennel seeds, red pepper flakes (optional)



Cheese



Asiago d'Allevo

- Aged 3 months to 2 years
- Texture: semi-hard to hard
- Flavor: Mild to intense, nutty, yeasty

Caciocavallo

- Aged 2 to 6 months
- Texture: Soft, springy to firm, stringy
- Flavor: mild, sweet to salty, buttery, sharp
- Made from cows, sheep's milk

Cheese

Gorgonzola

- Aged 2 to 6 months
- Texture: soft to semi-hard
- Flavor: mild, sweet, creamy, tangy to sharper, saltier

Grana Padano

- Aged 9 to 24 months
- Texture: hard, grainy to crumbly
- Flavor: mild to savory, rich, buttery



Cheese



Caciotta

- Aged 30 days to about 1 year
- Texture: Soft to semi-hard, depending on type of milk used
- Flavor: mild to tangy and sweet
- Made from goats, cows, sheep's milk

Bel Paese

- Aged 6 to 8 weeks
- Texture: semi-soft, smooth
- Flavor: buttery, mildly sweet, creamy

Cheese

Parmigiano-Reggiano

- Aged at least 2 years
- Texture: hard, dry, granular
- Flavor: rich, sharp, nutty, savory

Pecorino Romano

- Aged 5 to 12 months
- Texture: Hard inside, firm rind
- Flavor: strong, tangy, salty
- Made from sheep's milk



Cheese



Provolone

- Aged 3 months to 1 year
- Texture: semi-hard
- Flavor: sharp, tangy, nutty
- Made from cow's milk
- Two main types: Provolone Dolce (mild), Provolone Piccante (strong)

Cheese



Fresh Mozzarella

- Process: curd dipped into hot whey, stretched and kneaded to desired consistency
- Texture: semi-soft, moist, slightly elastic
- Flavor: mild, milky, subtle tangy
- Low moisture varieties: aged 2 to 4 weeks

Cheese



Fresh Ricotta

- Process: heat milk/cream, add acid, strain curds from whey
- Texture: fluffy, creamy, slightly grainy
- Flavor: mildly sweet



Ricotta Salata

- Aged for 30 days
- Texture: firm
- Flavor: salty



Ricotta Forte

- Fermented for 1 year
- Texture: soft and creamy
- Flavor: slightly bitter, spicy



Culinary Institute
of America

Any Questions?