



Culinary Institute  
of America

# 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

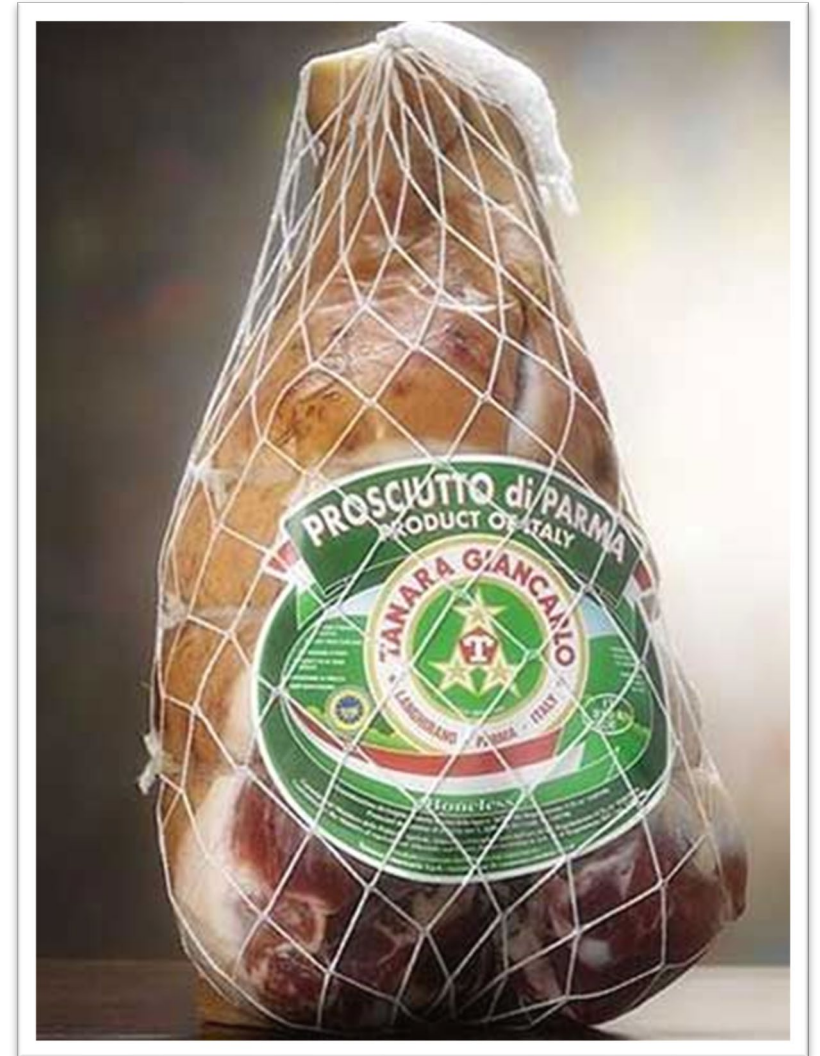
**Age requirement:** 9 months old

**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



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Any Questions?