

# Pasta Poco Vesto

A recipe from "[Cookbook in a Day](#)" 2022, by "gr"

## Ingredients

2 tbsp	extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup	fresh basil, <i>in pieces</i>
1 clove	garlic
1 dash (⅛ tsp)	salt
3-4	fresh tomatoes
2 oz	Italian-style fresh mozzarella, <i>cut in smallish cubes</i> parmigiano reggiano, <i>grated fine</i>
120–150 g	bucatini or other long-cut pasta

## Method

In a non-metal bowl, combine olive oil, salt, and basil. With a mallet, whack-to-crack a clove of garlic, remove peel and turn clove into the mixture.

Peel the tomatoes<sup>[tip A]</sup>, and set aside one for the *salsa minusculo*. Seed the remainder, reserving pulp. Chop tomatoes and add to oil mixture. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and let macerate at room temperature for at least 2 hours, but the longer the better (up to 10 hours). Also cover and keep at room temperature the reserved pulp and last tomato.

An hour before time: a) Turn the relish. b) If making the tiny sauce: pour off and reserve any puddling accumulated juices. c) Remove and toss out the garlic clove. d) Gently fold mozzarella into the relish, reseal.

Prepare the pasta when the time is nigh. If making the tiny sauce do this while pasta cooks.

**To make the tiny sauce:** While the pasta cooks: chop and seed the tomato you kept aside, reserving all. Heat this and all reserved pulp and juices in a saucepan with a touch of olive oil—a small splash of dry white wine can go here. Cook down and smush until easily pressed through fine-mesh sieve to extract liquid, discard chaff. Return liquid to cleaned saucepan and cook down until saucy. This will produce only a tiny amount—go as far as you dare. Test for acidity, add a very little sugar if needed.

Toss just a bit of the parmigiano with the hot drained pasta<sup>[tip B]</sup>. Flounce pasta into the relish and turn to warm all. Add fresh ground pepper, red pepper flakes to taste. A splash of lemon juice for sparkle. Top with Parmigiano, of course.

**Adding the tiny sauce:** Plate individual servings, and drizzle micro sauce only in the central area of each serving. Top with parmigiano to hide the secret sauce! If your tomatoes are flavourful, this is going to add a profound and clandestine zing to the dish.

Serve immediately. Makes 2 servings. (If doubling use just 3 Tbs oil.)

## Tips

A) Peeling tomatoes two ways! 1) Blanching (preferred): Cut an X in the bottom of the tomatoes and, one at a time, plunk them into rapidly boiling water for a count of 20 chimpanzees, then drop immediately into ice water. Skin of tomato now slips off easily. 2) By Peeler: You can just peel them like a delicate apple with a vegetable peeler. If your peeler is sharp and your tomatoes not too delicate, this works.

B) Warm a mixing bowl by colandering finished pasta over it. Ladle some pasta water into wide serving bowls to warm. Empty warmed mixing bowl and use this to toss the pasta, relish and some parmesan together. Empty the warmed serving bowls, and plate the meal.

C) For a creamier quality, if you have very good-quality pasta, you can prepare "low water" pasta: cooking in little enough water it cooks down and is never drained. This requires steady attention and adds to cooking time.