

***Spaghetti Alla Carbonara**

Serves 4

Note: Serve with five browned and sliced Italian chicken sausages and blanched green beans or green salad with cherry tomatoes.

1 pound thick sliced bacon

1 pound spaghetti

1 tablespoons olive oil and 2 tablespoons bacon oil

4 garlic cloves, lightly crushed

1/4 cup dry white wine

3 eggs

4 to 5 tablespoons freshly grated Pecorino Romano cheese

1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated

8 to 10 twists black pepper

4 tablespoons parsley, minced

3/4 cup hot milk

salt and pepper

Cut and discard most of the rind from bacon. Cut into ¼-inch strips. Heat bacon in medium pan until most of the fat is released and edges are slightly crisp. Remove bacon with slotted spoon and set aside. Strain bacon grease through a paper towel to remove any bacon bits and set aside.

Put 1 tablespoon olive oil, 2 tablespoons bacon grease and garlic in medium pan. Sauté until garlic is deep golden color, then remove and discard it. Remove pan from heat and whisk in the wine. Return pan to heat. When the wine has completely boiled away, turn off heat and add the cooked bacon. Set aside.

Break open eggs into the bowl in which you are later going to toss and serve spaghetti and whisk them lightly. Whisking continuously, add the hot milk. Whisk in the two grated cheeses, pepper and parsley.

Cook the spaghetti in 2 quarts of water and 1/2 tablespoon salt, stirring continuously. When spaghetti is nearly done, start reheating bacon/oil.

When the spaghetti is al dente, drain and shake away all moisture and add it to the bowl containing the egg mixture. Toss it rapidly and thoroughly until well coated.

Then pour the contents of the bacon-oil pan over it and toss thoroughly. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

Spaghetti Primavera

Serves 4

18 ounce spaghetti, cooked

3/4 cup snow peas

1/2 cup zucchini, sliced

1/2 cup baby peas

1/2 cup asparagus, chopped

5 mushrooms, sliced

1/4 cup pistachio nuts

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 1/2 teaspoons garlic, minced

1 medium Roma tomato, chopped

salt and pepper

Sauce:

1/2 cup half and half or cream

1 1/2 teaspoons cornstarch

4 tablespoons Parmesan, grated

2 tablespoons butter

Sauce: Whisk the half and half with cornstarch. Bring the half and half to a boil in a small saucepan, stirring continuously. Add butter and Parmesan cheese. Remove from stove and set aside.

Briefly sauté all vegetables separately except the peas; set aside Toast nuts if raw; set aside.

Heat oil. Sauté garlic for 1 minute. Add all the vegetables including the peas; sauté 1 minutes. Add tomato; sauté 1 minute. Season with salt and pepper.

Re-heat the sauce, if necessary. Gently combine the sauce, spaghetti and vegetables, or serve the vegetables on top of the spaghetti mixed with sauce.

Linguine with Clams

Servings 2

William-Sonoma

- 1 dozen littleneck clams
- 3 tablespoons. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 large garlic cloves
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- 1/3 cup dry white wine
- 4 ounces dried linguini pasta
- Fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves for garnish

Scrub the clams well under cold running water.

In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine the olive oil, garlic and red pepper flakes and cook until the garlic softens and is fragrant but not browned, about 3 minutes. Add the clams and wine and cover. Increase the heat to high and cook, shaking the pan occasionally, until the clams have opened, about 4 minutes. Remove from the heat and discard any unopened clams. Add the butter

and swirl the saucepan to melt the butter into the cooking liquid. Cover the pan to keep warm while you cook the pasta.

Add the pasta to the boiling water and cook until al dente, about 3 minutes. Drain the linguine and return it to its pot; stir in 1 tablespoon butter. Transfer to individual bowls. Pour the clams and sauce over the linguine dividing the clams evenly. Garnish with parsley leaves and serve. Serves 4.

Three Cheese Baked Tortellini

Serves 6

18 ounces fresh cheese tortellini, cooked in salted water for 3 ½ minutes.

1 large garlic clove, minced

1 large shallot, finely chopped

2 tablespoons oil

1 each: red, yellow and green bell pepper, roasted, peeled and finely chopped

3 ounces each: good quality smoked Gouda, Gruyere and Muenster, partially frozen and finely shredded

1/2 cup milk

1/3 cup chicken stock

2 tablespoons dry white wine or sherry

1 tablespoon fresh basil, finely sliced

1/2 teaspoon ground pepper

Sauté garlic, shallot and bell peppers in oil for 4 minutes until tender. Toss with tortellini. Toss cheeses with tortellini.

Boil milk, stock, wine, basil, salt and pepper. Pour over tortellini-cheese mixture. Do not stir.

Pour into greased baking dish. Cover with foil. Bake 375-degrees for 20 to 30 minutes or until sides are bubbling. Serve hot. Add additional milk if tortellini becomes dry.

Mushroom Calzone

Serves 6

Dough:

1-1/2 teaspoon dry yeast
1 tablespoon honey
1 cup warm water between 110 and 115-degrees
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
2 1/2 to 3 cups flour

Filling:

1 pound mushrooms, chopped
1/4 cup dried porcini mushrooms, rehydrated

1/2 cup minced onion
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 pound ricotta cheese
1 package. chopped spinach, cooked and well drained
2 packed cups grated mozzarella
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan
salt and pepper
dash of nutmeg
2 tablespoons butter

Mix together in the food processor bowl yeast, honey and water. Add salt; then mix in flour to workable dough. Knead 5 minutes. Cover and set in warm place to rise until doubled, about 1 hour.

Meanwhile, make the filling. Sauté mushrooms, porcini, onion and garlic in butter until translucent; drain off liquid. Combine onion mixture and cheeses in bowl with spinach, mix well and season to taste with salt, pepper and nutmeg.

Punch dough. Divide into six pieces and roll out in rounds 7-inch diameter and 1/4-inch thick. Put 3/4 cup filling on one half of circle of dough, leaving a 1/2-inch rim. Moisten rim with water, fold the empty side over and crimp edge with fork. Prick calzone.

Bake on doubled baking trays with parchment paper at 450-degrees until lightly browned, about 15 to 20 min. Note: Bottoms have a tendency to burn.

***Athenian Pasta Salad**

Serves 4

Marinade:

3/4 cup loosely packed fresh dill
1/2 cup loosely packed fresh mint
1 large garlic clove, minced
3 ounces red onion, cut into 1-inch pieces
1/3 cup olive oil
1 1/2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1/4 teaspoon salt
ground pepper

1 pound fusilli pasta, cooked and drained
1 pound large shrimp, shelled, cooked and chopped 1/2-inch pieces
6 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
Garnish: halved cherry tomatoes, Greek olives

Marinade: Add dill, mint , garlic and onion to food processor bowl. Pulse chop about 12 times. Add oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper; puree for 5 seconds.

Marinate shrimp in 1/4 cup dressing for 3 hours. Toss warm fusilli, shrimp and feta with dressing to taste. Cool. Garnish with cherry tomatoes halves and Greek olives. Pass remaining dressing separately.

Note: Can be served hot, cold or at room temperature. No not reheat as fusilli will break apart..

Tortellini with Salami & Cheese

Serves 4

3 large bell peppers: red, green,
yellow

4 ounces onion

1/2 cup fresh basil leaves

1/4 cup olive oil

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

3/4 teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes

15 ounces frozen cheese tortellini,
cooked

2 ounces spicy salami, 1/4-inch cubes

2 ounces imported provolone, 1/4-
inch cubes

Char peppers in broiler until black. Put in paper bag for 10 minutes to steam. Rub off charred skin. Cut peppers into 1/4 -inch julienne strips.

In the food processor bowl, coarsely chop onion with basil, oil, vinegar, salt and pepper using 5 on/off turns.

Combine peppers, tortellini, salami and provolone in bowl. Cool to room temperature. Just before serving add dressing to taste. Pass remaining dressing separately.

Fusilli with Garlic, Herb and Caper Sauce

Serves 4

1 pound dried fusilli, cooked
1/4 cup olive oil
1 large clove garlic
3 shallots, sliced
1/4 cup drained caper (1 1/2 teaspoon
liquid reserved)

1/3 cup minced fresh basil
2 tablespoons minced fresh thyme
1 teaspoon dried red pepper flakes
1/3 cup freshly grated Parmesan
3 tablespoons imported Romano
cheese

Sauté garlic and shallots in oil over medium-low heat for 2 minutes. Add capers and liquid; heat through. Add drained pasta to skillet. Mix in basil, thyme and red pepper. Sprinkle with cheeses. Note: Fusilli falls apart when re- heated.

Vegetarian-Cheese Sauce with Corkscrew Pasta

Serves 4

1 medium zucchini

1 Japanese eggplant, peeled

½ medium onion

4 ounces mushrooms

1 large red pepper

½ cup Parmesan cheese

½ pound curly pasta, cooked

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 cup chickpeas, drained

⅔ cup chicken broth

Quarter zucchini vertically; slice in feed tube of food processor. Cut eggplant in half cross-wise; insert in feed tube and slice. Peel and quarter onion; stand upright in feed tube and slice with firm pressure. By hand, slice mushrooms and pepper.

Sauté onion, pepper, eggplant and mushrooms in oil until tender, about 5 minutes; set aside

To work bowl add Parmesan and chickpeas with motor running, pour broth slowly through feed tube and puree.

Add chickpea mixture and zucchini to vegetables. Stir to combine and cook 2 minutes to heat through. Serve over pasta.

Alternate Method: Sauté all the vegetables including zucchini until tender. Puree all vegetables, chickpeas and cheese in food processor, adding chicken broth slowly through the feed tube. Heat thoroughly and serve over or toss with pasta.

Pasta Salad with Red Pepper and Cucumber

NOTE: This recipe would be best prepared one day before serving.

3/4 cups olive oil
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed
lemon juice
2 cloves garlic, minced
salt and pepper
1 pound small shell pasta or other
small shape
1 1/2 prepared roasted red peppers
such as Peloponnese, coarsely
chopped

1 small cucumber, peeled, halved,
seeded and sliced
1/3 cup red onion, chopped
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley,
preferably Italian
6 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
Anchovy fillets (garnish)
Garnish: Greek Olives

Whisk together 1/2 cup olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, and salt and pepper to taste. Set dressing aside.

Cook pasta in 4 quarts boiling water until very *al dente*. Drain and toss in a large bowl with the remaining 1/4 cup olive oil. Cool to room temperature, occasionally stirring the pasta to coat thoroughly.

Add roasted peppers, cucumber, onion and parsley to pasta and mix well. Add reserved dressing and mix thoroughly. Gently stir in most of the cheese, reserving some for garnish. Garnish with anchovy fillets, olives and remaining feta cheese. Serve cold.

***Porcini Mushroom Pasta, Hot or Cold**

Serves 6

1 pound small shell pasta, cooked

2 tablespoons butter

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 medium onion, minced

2 medium garlic cloves, minced

1 to 2 teaspoon fresh rosemary
leaves, minced

1 pound white button mushrooms,
stems trimmed and sliced thin

1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms

2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley

1/3 cup Parmesan, grated

salt and pepper

If served hot: mix in cooked peas

If served cold: mix in thinly sliced
green onion and finely chopped
celery. Add mayonnaise and/or
mustard to taste.

Place porcini mushrooms in small bowl and cover with 1 cup hot water. Soak 20 minutes. Gently remove mushrooms from liquid with fork. Wash under cold water if they feel gritty, then chop. Strain soaking liquid through sieve lined with paper towel. Reserve soaking liquid.

Sauté onion in butter and oil until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and rosemary; sauté 1 minute. Add sliced mushrooms; sauté until liquid evaporates, about 8 minutes. Add chopped porcini; sauté 1 to 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add soaking liquid. Bring to simmer. Add cooked pasta and cheese; simmer for 1 to 2 minutes. Serve garnished with parsley.

Note: Good hot or cold. See additional ingredients above.

***Pasta Rustica**

Serves 8 to 10

Williams-Sonoma

Sauce:

¼ cup olive oil

2 yellow onions, chopped

4 garlic cloves, minced

1 pound chicken or turkey Italian
sausage, removed from casing and
broken into bite-size pieces

¼ cup fresh oregano, chopped

½ teaspoon red pepper flakes

2 cans (28 oz. each) tomatoes in
puree

salt to taste

1 pound. penne pasta, cooked al
dente and drained well

1 ¼ cups whole milk ricotta cheese

2 cups shredded Fontina cheese

½ cup grated Parmesan

In large sauté pan (with lid) heat oil. Add onion and cook until golden, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook, 1 minute. Add sausage and cook until no longer pink, about 6 minutes. Stir in, oregano and red pepper. Add tomatoes with puree and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 15 minutes. Taste and adjust seasonings.

Preheat oven to 350-degrees. Lightly oil a large, heavy 13x9x2 baking dish. In a large bowl, toss pasta with sauce, ricotta and fontina. Spread in baking dish and sprinkle with Parmesan. Bake until cheeses are melted and tops of pasta are crusty, about 30 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

*Pasta Puttanesca

Serves 4

Martha Stewart

1 pound spaghetti or linguine
3 tablespoon olive oil
6 medium cloves garlic, minced
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
10 to 12 anchovies, rinsed and minced
1-28oz can diced tomatoes with juice
3 tablespoon capers or chopped green olives, drained

½ cup Greek olives, pitted and coarsely chopped
2 tablespoons coarsely chopped parsley
optional: cooked ½ pound sweet Italian sausage

Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add garlic, red pepper flakes and anchovies. Cook, stirring until aromatic, about 1 to 2 minutes. Add tomatoes, capers and olives. Bring to boil. Lower heat to a fast simmer and cook stirring frequently, until thickened, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, Cook pasta in 1 gallon salted boiling water until al dente. Drain. Stir sauce into drained pasta. Stir in parsley. Serve immediately.

Serving Suggestions: Italian turkey sausage sliced on diagonal with spinach salad.

***Biba's Ricotta Squash Gnocchi**

Serves 6 to 8 as a side dish

Biba Caggiano's Mother

2 pounds butternut squash
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 cup whole-milk ricotta
¾ cup Parmigiano-Reggiano, grated
5 teaspoons coarse salt

1 2/3+ cups unbleached flour
10 fresh sage leaves, torn
coarse salt
1/3-1/2 cup Parmigiano-Reggiano,
grated

Preheat oven to 375-degree. Line baking sheet with heavy foil. Cut squash in half lengthwise. Place on baking sheet, cut side down. Cover with foil. Bake until tender, 1 to 1 ½ hours. Let cool slightly; remove and discard seeds and scrape pulp from skin. Place pulp in large kitchen towel (not terrycloth), wrap it around the squash, and squeeze out approximately ¾ cup of the juice.

In large bowl, combine squash pulp, egg, ricotta, cheese, 2 teaspoons salt, and 1 2/3 cups flour. Mix with wooden spoon or your hands until thoroughly blended together. Transfer mixture to lightly floured board. With your hands, work gently into dough adding more flour if the dough is sticky. Dust dough lightly with flour and place in a bowl. Cover with towel and refrigerate 2 to 3 hours.

To form the gnocchi, cut off a piece of dough about the size of an orange. Flour your hands lightly, using both hands, roll out the piece of dough with a light back-and-forth motion into a rope about the thickness of your index finger. Cut the rope into 1-inch pieces. Hold a fork with the tines against the work surface, the curved part of the fork facing away. Starting from the bottom of the tines of the fork, press each piece of dough with your index finger firmly upward along the length of the tines, then let the gnocchi fall back onto the work surface. Repeat with remaining pieces. Transfer gnocchi to a lightly floured platter or baking sheet.

Bring a large pot of water to boil over high heat. Add remaining 1 tablespoon salt and gnocchi. Cover pot, and cook until water returns to a boil.

Uncover, and cook until gnocchi rise to the surface, about 1 to 2 minutes. Let cook for just 20 to 30 seconds more.

While the gnocchi are cooking, make the sauce. Melt butter in large skillet over medium heat. When it begins to foam, add sage, and stir a few times.

Remove gnocchi from the pot with a slotted spoon, draining off excess water. (If you are not yet ready to serve, place gnocchi on a lightly oiled platter.) Place in skillet. Season lightly with salt and add a small handful of cheese. Stir over medium heat until gnocchi are well coated with butter. Adjust for seasoning.

Lemon-Parsley Orzo

Serves 8 (2)

Cooks Illustrated

(1) 4 cups chicken broth

(1) 4 cups water

(1/2) 2 cups orzo

1 tablespoon butter

½ cup minced parsley

grated rind of 1 lemon

salt and fresh ground pepper

Bring stock and water to boil. Add salt and orzo. Cook uncovered for 7 to 9 minutes or until tender. Drain thoroughly; reserve liquid. Toss with butter, lemon rind, parsley and lots of pepper to taste and a little salt if needed. Add additional cooking liquid if too dry. Serve immediately. Good with lamb dishes.

Spicy Couscous with Raisins

Serves 6 (2)

1 onion, finely chopped

1 tablespoon olive oil

Optional: ½ cup sliced almonds

½ cup raisins

1 ½ teaspoons ground cumin

½ teaspoon ground turmeric

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

About 3 ¼ cups chicken broth (¾ cup)

2 tablespoons butter (1 ½ teaspoons)

2 cups couscous (½ cup), (Israeli pearl, simmer 9 minutes)

Sauté onion in oil until golden, about 5 minutes. Add almonds and raisins; cook one minute. Add cumin, turmeric and cinnamon and continue to cook, stirring, until almonds and spices are just toasted, about one minute more.

Add 3 cups broth and butter and bring mixture to boil over high heat. Stir in couscous, cover the pan, and remove the pan from the heat. Let stand

until all of the liquid has been absorbed, at least 5 minutes, or up to 1 hour. Fluff with a fork before serving.

Macaroni Salad

Serves 4

7 ounce elbow macaroni, cooked and drained

2 tablespoon vinegar

1/2 cup chopped green pepper

1/4 cup diced celery

2 tablespoon pickle relish

Optional: 1/2 4-ounce jar chopped pimento

2 tablespoons minced green onion

1/2 cup each: diced cheddar cheese, cubed Polish sausage

2/3 cup mayonnaise

Add vinegar to macaroni and mix lightly; let stand 10 minutes. Stir in the remaining ingredients.

Variation: Instead of mayonnaise try basil olive oil

Diana's Meat Sauce for Pasta

Serves 8

Meat:

1 pound stew meat

olive oil

1 can beef broth

seasonings: carrot, onion, parsley,
celery

Sauce:

3 large garlic cloves, minced

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 28 ounce can S&W Ready-Cut
tomatoes

1 tablespoon oregano

1/2 teaspoon sugar

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon cayenne

3 cups tomato sauce

1 1/2 tablespoons sherry vinegar

salt and pepper

1 pound rigatoni

1 tablespoon butter

garnish: minced parsley

Meat: Dry off the meat with paper towels; lightly season with salt and pepper. Brown meat in olive oil. Add beef broth and seasonings. Bring to a boil and simmer, covered, for about 2 hours or until very tender. Drain saving the liquid. Let the meat cool somewhat; chop the vegetables and shred the meat with your hands. Set aside.

Sauce: Sauté garlic in olive oil. Add tomatoes, oregano, sugar, cinnamon, cayenne. Reduce until the tomatoes are the consistency of tomato paste; stirring occasionally. Transfer the sauce to a large heavy saucepan. Add the meat-vegetables mixture, drained liquid and tomato sauce. Simmer covered 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in sherry vinegar. Season to taste.

Meanwhile, bring a gallon of salted to water to boil. Add rigatoni and simmer until still firm, about 15 minutes. Drain and return to the pot tossing with the butter.

Serve sauce on top of rigatoni garnished with parsley.

Couscous

Serves 6 (2)

1 onion, finely chopped
1 tablespoon olive oil
½ cup raisins,
1 ½ teaspoon ground cumin

½ teaspoon ground turmeric
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
about 3 ¼ cups chicken broth (¾
cup)
2 tablespoons butter (1 ½ teaspoon)
2 cups couscous (1/2 cup)

Soak raisins in hot water for 15 minutes; drain. Sauté onion in oil until golden, about 5 minutes. Add raisins cooking 1 minute. Add cumin, turmeric and cinnamon and continue to cook, stirring, until spices are just toasted, about one minute more. (If making ahead, add about ¼ cup broth to help remove the seasonings from the pan, then transfer the cooled mixture to airtight container, chill up to 3 days or freeze up to a month.)

Add 3 cups broth and butter and bring mixture to boil over high heat. Stir in couscous, cover the pan, and remove it from the heat. Let stand until all of the liquid has been absorbed, at least 5 minutes, or up to 1 hour. Fluff with a fork before serving.

Lasagna Bolognese

Serves 8

Cook's Illustrated

Meat Sauce (Ragu):

1 medium carrot, peeled and roughly chopped
1 medium celery rib, roughly chopped
½ small onion, roughly chopped
1 can (28 ounces) whole tomatoes with juice
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
8 ounces ground beef
8 ounces ground pork
8 ounces ground veal
1 ½ cups whole milk
1 ½ cups dry white wine

2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper

Béchamel Sauce:

4 tablespoons unsalted butter
¼ cup flour
4 cups whole milk
¾ teaspoon salt

9 ounces no-boil lasagna noodles
1 cup mozzarella & 1 C parmesan finely shredded

Meat Sauce: Process carrot, celery, and onion in food processor until finely chopped, about ten 1-second pulses, scraping down bowl as necessary; transfer mixture to small bowl. Wipe out food processor workbowl; process tomatoes and juice until finely chopped, six to eight 1-second pulses. Heat butter in heavy-bottomed Dutch oven over medium heat until foaming; add carrot, celery, and onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened but not browned, about 4 minutes. Add ground meats and cook, breaking meat into 1-inch pieces with wooden spoon, about 1 minute. Add milk and stir, breaking meat into 1/2-inch bits; bring to simmer and cook, stirring to break meat into small pieces, until almost all liquid has evaporated, 20 to 30 minutes. Using potato masher or wooden spoon, break up any remaining clumps of meat (no large pieces should remain). Add wine and bring to simmer; cook, stirring occasionally, until liquid has evaporated, 20 to 30 minutes. Stir in tomato paste until combined, about 1 minute; add chopped tomatoes, salt, and pepper. Bring to simmer, then reduce heat to medium-low and cook until sauce is slightly thickened, about 15 minutes. (You should have about 6 cups meat sauce.) Transfer meat sauce to bowl and cool until just warm to touch, about 30 minutes.

2. Béchamel Sauce: While meat sauce simmers, melt butter in medium saucepan over medium heat until foaming; add flour and cook, whisking constantly, until thoroughly combined, about 1 1/2 minutes; mixture should not brown. Gradually whisk in milk; increase heat to medium-high and bring to full boil, whisking frequently. Add salt, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer 10 minutes, stirring occasionally with heatproof rubber spatula or wooden spoon, making sure to scrape bottom and corners of saucepan. (You should have about 3 1/3 cups.) Transfer béchamel to bowl and cool until just warm to touch, about 30 minutes.

3. To assemble and bake: Adjust oven rack to middle position; heat oven to 425 degrees. Place noodles in 13- by 9-inch baking dish and cover with very hot tap water; soak 5 minutes, agitating noodles occasionally to prevent sticking. Remove noodles from water, place in single layer on kitchen towel, and pat dry. Wipe out baking dish and spray lightly with nonstick cooking spray. Stir béchamel to recombine; mix 3/4 cup warm béchamel into warm meat sauce until thoroughly combined.

4. Distribute 1 cup béchamel-enriched meat sauce in baking dish. Place three noodles in single layer on top of sauce, arranging them close together, but not touching, at center of pan. Spread 1 1/4 cups béchamel-enriched meat sauce evenly over noodles, spreading sauce to edge of noodles but not to edge of dish (see illustration 1). Drizzle 1/3 cup béchamel evenly over meat sauce (illustration 2). Sprinkle 1/3 cup Parmesan evenly over béchamel. Repeat layering of noodles, béchamel-enriched meat sauce, béchamel, and cheese 3 more times. Place final 3 noodles on top and cover completely with remaining béchamel, spreading béchamel with rubber spatula and allowing it to spill over noodles (illustration 3). Sprinkle evenly with remaining Parmesan.

5. Spray large sheet foil with nonstick cooking spray and cover lasagna; bake until bubbling, about 30 minutes. Remove foil, increase heat to 450 degrees, and continue to bake until surface is spotty brown, about 15 minutes. Cool 15 minutes; cut into pieces and serve.

Smooth Mac and Cheese

Serves 6

By Eric Akis

8 ounces elbow macaroni

3 tablespoons butter, plus some for greasing the dish

3 tablespoons all-purpose flour

2 1/2 cups warm milk (see Note)

3/4 teaspoon dry mustard

1 tablespoon Worcestershire

1/2 teaspoon dried onion

- pinch cayenne pepper

- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

white pepper to taste

8 ounces aged cheddar cheese, grated

2 to 3 tablespoons freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Boil the macaroni in a generous amount of lightly salted water until just tender, about eight minutes. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350 F. Lightly butter an 8-by-8-inch baking dish.

Melt the 3 tablespoons butter in a medium pot set over medium-low heat. Mix in the flour and cook until well blended and blond in color (like shortbread).

Whisk quickly and dribble in 1/2 cup of milk. Cook until the mixture is quite thick, then slowly whisk in the remaining milk. Bring to a simmer, stirring frequently so it does not scorch on the bottom, cook one minute to thicken, and then remove sauce from heat.

Mix in the paprika, cayenne, salt and pepper. Now gradually stir in three-quarters of the cheddar cheese until it's just melted and combined with the white sauce.

When the macaroni is cooked, drain it well. Stir the macaroni into the sauce, and then spoon into the baking dish. Top with remaining cheddar cheese and Parmesan cheese. Bake for 20 minutes covered, or until light golden and just bubbling.

Basic Israeli Couscous

Serves 8

Claire Robinson

3 tablespoons olive oil or lemon olive oil

2 cups Israeli couscous

2 1/4 cups hot water

salt and pepper

optional: lemon zest, chopped vegetables and/or meat

Heat oil in medium saucepan. Add couscous and cook stirring until light brown, about 7 minutes. Add hot water and season with salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to simmer. Cover and cook until liquid is absorbed, about 10 minutes. Stir in optional ingredients and drizzle with oil.

Crab Pasta With Snap Peas and Mint

Serves 2 to 3

NY Times

fine sea salt, as needed
4-5 ounces fresh linguine or spaghetti
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, to taste
1 cup sliced sugar snap peas
2 scallions, whites and greens (both light and dark) thinly sliced
 $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon red chili flakes, more to taste
zest of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon, finely grated
8 ounces crab meat, preferably lump, patted dry on paper towels
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup torn mint leaves
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons lemon juice, more to taste
freshly ground black pepper
extra-virgin olive oil, for serving
flaky sea salt, for serving

Bring a large pot of heavily salted water to a boil. Add pasta and boil 2 to 3 minutes. Reserve 1 cup pasta water, then drain. Add pasta back to the dry pot and mix in 1 tablespoon butter. Set aside off heat.

Boil 3/4 cup pasta water in a large skillet over medium heat; reduce to 1/2 cup. Wisk in butter, then stir in snap peas, scallions, chili flakes and a pinch of salt. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until peas are tender. Stir in lemon zest and mix well.

Add drained pasta to the pan along with crab, 1/3 cup mint, the lemon juice and black pepper. Toss, adding more pasta water if the mixture looks dry, until warmed through. Remove from heat and serve topped with remaining mint, a drizzle of oil, more lemon if you'd like, and a sprinkle of flaky sea salt.

Optional Additions: try adding 1 minced garlic clove and/or top with coarsely grated Parmesan cheese.

Baked Ziti with Spinach and Tomatoes

½ Recipe serves 8 with side dishes

1 1/3 pound hot Italian sausage (turkey or chicken)

1 1/2 medium onion, chopped

3 large garlic cloves, chopped

2 28 oz. cans diced, peeled fire roasted tomatoes

1 8 oz container of purchased pesto sauce (about 1/2 cup)

1 lb penne pasta (about 3 cups), freshly cooked

10 oz or greater ready-to-use spinach leaves

6 ounces mozzarella cheese, cubed

1 cup grated Parmesan cheese (about 3 ounces)

Heat heavy large saucepan or big dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add sausage, onion and garlic and sauté until sausage is cooked through, breaking up meat with back of spoon, about 10 minutes.

Add tomatoes with juices to pan. Simmer until sauce thickens slightly, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes.

Stir in pesto. Season sauce with salt and pepper. (Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate. Bring to simmer before continuing.)

Preheat oven to 375° F. Lightly oil 13 x 9-inch glass baking dish. Combine pasta, spinach, mozzarella and 1/3 cup Parmesan cheese in large bowl. Stir in hot tomato sauce.

Transfer mixture to prepared baking dish.

Sprinkle remaining 2/3 cup Parmesan cheese over. Bake until sauce bubbles and cheeses melt, about 30 minutes.

Baked Skillet Pasta With Cheddar and Spiced Onions

4 to 6 servings

6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

3 large onions, thinly sliced

1 large bay leaf

1 ½ teaspoons ground coriander

1 teaspoon ground cumin

Pinch of cayenne, plus more to taste

1 ¼ teaspoons fine sea salt, plus more as needed

3 fat garlic cloves, minced

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 teaspoon black pepper

⅛ teaspoon ground allspice

1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes

1 pound small pasta, such as rotini or shells

¾ cup chopped parsley or cilantro (or use a combination of cilantro and parsley), plus more for serving

8 ounces shredded Cheddar

½ cup grated Parmesan

garnish with chopped parsley

Serve with Cholula

Heat 1/4 cup oil in a 12-inch skillet over high heat. Add onions and bay leaf, and cook, stirring frequently, until softened and browned in spots, 12 to 20 minutes. (Reduce heat if the pan starts to scorch.) Lower heat to medium, and stir in coriander, ground cumin, cayenne and 1/4 teaspoon salt; cook 1 more minute. Transfer half the onions to a bowl and reserve (leave the bay leaf in the skillet).

Add garlic, cumin seeds, pepper and allspice to the skillet, and stir. Cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Pour in the juice from the canned tomatoes. Use your hands or kitchen scissors to squish or cut the tomatoes into pieces and add to pan. Fill the empty tomato can with water, and pour into the skillet. Add remaining 2 tablespoons oil and remaining 1 teaspoon salt, and bring mixture to a simmer. Simmer until thickened, about 20 minutes. Taste, and add more salt and spices if you like. Remove bay leaf.

As mixture cooks, heat oven to 400 degrees and bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook pasta until just about 2 minutes shy of al dente. Reserve 1 cup pasta water, and drain pasta.

Stir pasta, reserved pasta water, and parsley into skillet with tomato sauce. Top with reserved browned onions, Cheddar and Parmesan. Transfer to oven and bake until golden and bubbly, 20 to 25 minutes. If you like, you can run the pan under the broil to brown the top, or leave it as is. Let cool slightly, top with more parsley, if desired, and serve with hot sauce, if you like.

Sausage and Peppers Pasta with Broccoli

Serves 4-6

Kay Chun, NY Times Cooking

NOTE: If serving as a leftover, cook broccoli just before assembly.

2 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1-pound sweet Italian pork sausage
1-pound broccoli, cut into 1 1/2-inch florets (about 4 cups)
1 medium red bell peppers, cored, seeded and thinly sliced
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

Kosher salt and pepper
1/2 pound pasta
1/2 cup grated Parmesan, plus more for serving
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (from about 1/2 lemon)
1/2 teaspoon red-pepper flakes
2 tablespoons butter

Sauté sausage over medium heat breaking up the meat using a wooden spoon, until browned, about 5 minutes. Scrape the mixture into a medium bowl. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons oil, peppers, onion and garlic to the skillet and

season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring often, until they soften and begin to brown. Add the broccoli and cook until tender-crisp. Set aside.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water until al dente. Reserve 1 cup cooking water and drain the pasta. Return the pasta and reserved cooking water to the pot over low heat. Add all the vegetables, sausage, and its accumulated juices, 1/2 cup Parmesan, the lemon juice, red-pepper flakes and 2 tablespoons butter. Stir vigorously until liquid is slightly thickened and saucy, about 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Serve the pasta with additional Parmesan for sprinkling on top.

Creamy Corn Pasta With Basil

Yields 3 to 4 servings

Hints: Simmer corn cobs in water for 10 minutes. Use water to cook pasta. Add garnish: bacon or cherry tomato halved.

12 ounces dry orecchiette or farfalle
(bowtie)

1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more for
drizzling

1 bunch scallions (about 8),
trimmed and thinly sliced (keep the
whites and greens separate)

2 large ears corn, shucked and
kernels removed (2 cups kernels)

½ teaspoon ground black pepper,
more for serving

3 tablespoons unsalted butter

½ cup grated Parmesan cheese,
more to taste

⅓ cup torn basil or mint, more for
garnish

¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes, or to
taste

Fresh lemon juice, as needed

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil. Cook pasta until 1 minute shy of al dente, according to the package directions. Drain, reserving 1/2 cup of pasta water.

Meanwhile, heat oil in large sauté pan over medium heat; add scallion whites and a pinch of salt and cook until soft, 3 minutes. Add 1/4 cup water and all but 1/4 cup corn; simmer until corn is heated through and almost tender, 3 to 5 minutes. Add 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper, transfer to a blender, and purée mixture until smooth, adding a little extra water if needed to get a thick but pourable texture.

Heat the same skillet over high heat. Add butter and let melt. Add reserved 1/4 cup corn and cook until tender, 1 to 2 minutes. (It's O.K. if the butter browns; that deepens the flavor.) Add the corn purée and cook for 30 seconds to heat and combine the flavors.

Reduce heat to medium. Add pasta and half the reserved pasta cooking water, tossing to coat. Cook for 1 minute, then add a little more of the pasta cooking water if the mixture seems too thick. Stir in 1/4 cup of the scallion greens, the Parmesan, the herbs, the red pepper flakes, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Sprinkle with fresh lemon juice to taste. Transfer to warm pasta bowls and garnish with more scallions, herbs, a drizzle of olive oil and black pepper.

Longevity Noodles with Chicken, Ginger and Mushrooms

Serves 2-3

Julia Moskin, NY Times Cooking

7 ounces thin fresh noodles, like lo mein or spaghetti
2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil
2 large boneless chicken thighs, cut into 1/4-inch-thick, bite-size slices
1 tablespoon finely shredded ginger
1 teaspoon plus 1 tablespoon Chinese rice wine or dry sherry
1 teaspoon cornstarch
1 teaspoon plus 1 tablespoon soy sauce

Salt
1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper
2 tablespoons peanut or vegetable oil
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
5 ounces (about 3 cups) thinly sliced Napa cabbage
4 ounces (about 2 cups) fresh shiitake mushrooms, stems removed, caps thinly sliced
1/2 cup finely shredded scallions

Bring a medium saucepan of salted water to boil over high heat and cook noodles until just done, 3 to 5 minutes, stirring to prevent sticking. Drain in a colander and rinse with

cold water until cool, then shake well to remove water. Return noodles to pot, add sesame oil, and toss.

Put chicken in a shallow bowl and add ginger, one teaspoon rice wine, cornstarch, one teaspoon soy sauce, 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper. Mix gently to combine. In a small bowl, combine remaining one tablespoon rice wine and one tablespoon soy sauce.

Heat a wok over high heat until a bead of water evaporates almost on contact. Swirl in one tablespoon peanut oil, add red pepper flakes and stir-fry 10 seconds using a metal spatula. Push pepper flakes aside and add chicken, spreading in a single layer to maximize contact with the wok. Let cook undisturbed one minute, until chicken begins to sear.

Stir-fry chicken and pepper flakes together, tossing in the wok, for a minute or 2 until just done. Remove to a bowl. Add cabbage and mushrooms and stir-fry one minute until just wilted but not cooked. Empty into the bowl with chicken.

Reheat wok, swirl in remaining one tablespoon peanut oil, and add noodles. Stir-fry 30 seconds, moving constantly to heat through. Swirl soy sauce-rice wine mixture and add to wok along with chicken-vegetable mixture and scallions. Sprinkle on 3/4 teaspoon salt and stir-fry a minute or 2 until chicken and vegetables are heated through.

Taiwanese Meefun

YIELD 4 to 6 servings

Sue Li NY Times Cooking

5 ounces dried rice vermicelli
4 dried shiitake mushrooms
5 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 eggs, lightly beaten
2 large shallots, thinly sliced
Kosher salt
1 large carrot, cut into thin
matchsticks (about 2 1/2 cups)
1/4 small green cabbage, shredded
(about 2 1/2 cups)

8 ounces baked or smoked tofu, cut
into thin matchsticks (about 2 cups)
or cooked pork or shrimp
3 tablespoons soy sauce
1+ cup chicken broth
1 teaspoon ground white pepper
1/4 cup fresh cilantro, roughly
chopped
optional: black vinegar or balsamic
Chile oil, for serving

In a medium bowl, cover rice vermicelli in cold water and soak until softened, 5 to 10 minutes. Drain and set aside. Soak dried shiitake mushrooms in

warm water until hydrated and softened, about 10 minutes, then drain and slice 1/4-inch thick.

Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large, deep skillet over medium. Add beaten eggs, swirl to create an even layer, and cook until eggs are set and cooked through, about 1 minute. Transfer the cooked eggs onto a cutting board. Let cool slightly, then cut into matchsticks. Set aside.

Return the skillet to the stove and raise heat to medium-high. Add remaining 3 tablespoons vegetable oil, the shallots and shiitake mushrooms. Season with salt. Cook, stirring frequently, until the edges of shallots begin to brown, 3 to 4 minutes.

Add carrot, season with salt, and cook, stirring frequently, until softened but still crisp, 1 to 2 minutes. Add cabbage, season with salt, and cook, stirring frequently, until slightly wilted, 1 to 2 minutes.

Add tofu, soy sauce, drained rice vermicelli and 1 cup chicken stock, and cook, stirring frequently, until the noodles absorb the water, 5 to 6 minutes. Season with salt and white pepper, and stir in reserved eggs to combine. Serve topped with cilantro and black vinegar. Serve with chile oil to the side.

Cold Sesame Noodles with Crunchy Vegetables

Serves 4

Mark Bittman, NT Times Cooking

4 cups chopped fresh crunchy raw vegetables: snow peas (blanched), bell peppers, cucumbers, scallions
2 packages fresh Chinese Udon noodles
optional: cooked chicken, shrimp or tofu
garnish: 1/3 cup green onion sliced on the diagonal

Sauce:

2 tablespoons dark sesame oil
1/4 cup roasted sesame seeds, blended into a paste
1/4 cup peanut butter
1 1/2 teaspoons sugar
3 tablespoons soy sauce
2 teaspoons minced fresh ginger
1 tablespoon rice vinegar
1 teaspoon chili sauce
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or more to taste

Prepare the vegetables: trim, seed, peel as necessary and cut into bite-size pieces. Set aside.

Cook the noodles following the package directions. Drain and rinse in cold water, then toss with a little sesame oil. Set aside.

Whisk together all the sauce ingredients. Thin the sauce with hot water until it's about the consistency of heavy cream. Adjust the seasonings. (You will need 1/4 to 1/2 cup per serving.)

When you're ready to eat, toss noodles, vegetables and optional chicken, shrimp or tofu. Stir in sauce and top with green onion.

Cold Sesame Noodles with Crunchy Vegetables

Serves 4

NY Times Cooking

Salt

4 cups chopped fresh crunchy raw vegetables: snow peas (blanched), bell peppers, cucumbers, scallions

12 ounces fresh Chinese egg noodles (Udon) or long pasta like linguine

2 tablespoons dark sesame oil

1 cup tahini, peanut butter or a combination

1 tablespoons sugar

1/3 cup soy sauce

1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger

2 tablespoons rice vinegar

chili-garlic sauce to taste

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or more to taste

optional: cold, cooked chicken, shrimp or tofu

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and salt it. Prepare the vegetables: trim, seed, peel as necessary and cut into bite-size pieces. Reserve in a container until ready to use.

Cook the noodles in the boiling water until tender but not mushy. When they're done, rinse in cold water, then toss with a little sesame oil. Store in one or more containers.

Whisk together the sesame oil and tahini, sugar, soy, ginger, vinegar, chili-garlic sauce and pepper in a large bowl. Thin the sauce with hot water until it's about the consistency of heavy cream. Adjust these seasonings to taste. You will need 1/4 to 1/2 cup per serving.

When you're ready to eat, toss a portion of the noodles and a portion of the vegetables; top with sauce and stir to coat.

Mushroom Wafu Pasta

Serves 4 to 6

Hana Asbrink

Suggestions: Serve Wafu with seared scallops garnished with sesame seeds on a bed of wilted spinach.

1 pound dried spaghetti, preferably bronze-cut
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
8 tablespoons unsalted butter
4 to 6 garlic cloves, minced
1 pound shiitake mushrooms, or a combination of shiitake, shimeji and maitake, stems trimmed (if dry), separated and torn by hand

¼ cup soy sauce
2 to 3 scallions, finely sliced, for garnish
Shredded, roasted nori (like shredded kizami nori or half of a nori sheet cut into thin matchsticks with scissors), for garnish

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil. Cook pasta until 1 minute shy of al dente, according to the package directions. Reserve 1 cup of pasta water, then drain.

While pasta cooks, make the sauce: In a large skillet, heat olive oil and 4 tablespoons of butter over medium. When the butter is melted and starts to foam, add garlic and mushrooms. Cook, stirring only occasionally to ensure garlic doesn't burn, until mushrooms start browning on the edges, about 6 to 7 minutes. Season with 1/2 teaspoon salt and about 12 to 15 cracks of pepper. Remove mushrooms to paper toweling.

Return the skillet to medium low. Add remaining 4 tablespoons butter and soy sauce, allowing butter to melt into the soy sauce. Add drained pasta and 1/2 cup of the pasta water to the skillet, tossing to coat with the sauce. Cook, adding more pasta water 1 tablespoon at a time as needed, until pasta is glossy, about 1 minute. Adjust the seasoning.

Reheat the mushrooms. Serve pasta topped with mushrooms, sliced scallions and shredded nori.

Bacon and Onion Pasta

Serves 2

8 ounces bacon

½ large red onion

cup extra-virgin olive oil

Kosher salt and black pepper

4 garlic cloves

¼ teaspoon red-pepper flakes

½ teaspoon Herbes de Provence

½ cup sweet red vermouth (vermouth rouge)

4 ounces spaghetti pasta

¼ cup finely chopped fresh parsley

¼ cup finely grated Parmesan or Pecorino Romano

Take the bacon out of its packaging with the slices still stuck together and place on a cutting board. Cut the bacon, still stacked, crosswise into ½-inch

slices to create little bacon pieces, also known as lardons. Sauté in skillet on medium-low heat until the bacon has rendered much of its fat but is still pink. Drain off about ½ the accumulated fat.

Halve and thinly slice the onions. Caramelized in a skillet. Season with a little salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to a boil. Smash the garlic cloves with the side of your knife and thinly slice them. When the bacon and onions have cooked, add the onions to the bacon and stir in the garlic, red-pepper flakes, herbes de Provence and vermouth. Cook over medium heat until the vermouth is almost evaporated, and the bacon and onions look jammy and caramelized but not burnt, 5 to 10 minutes.

Cook the pasta according to package instructions. Reserve 1/2 cup of the cooking liquid. Drain the pasta and add to the bacon-onion skillet.

Add the parsley and Parmesan to the skillet, and toss until evenly combined, adding some of the reserved cooking liquid if the sauce needs thinning out. Taste, adding more salt and pepper as needed, and serve immediately.

Ricotta Polpette in Tomato Sauce

Makes 8 Servings

By Anna Francese Gass

Double sauce recipe if serving over pasta

For the Sauce

10 fresh basil leaves

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

2 garlic cloves, peeled and lightly
smashed

1 teaspoon red-pepper flakes
(optional)

2 (28-ounce) cans/about 8 cups
crushed tomatoes

2 tablespoons tomato paste

1 tablespoon kosher salt (such as
Diamond Crystal)

1 teaspoon freshly ground black
pepper
sugar to taste

For the Ricotta Polpette

1 (32-ounce) container/about 4
cups whole-milk ricotta cheese
2½ cups seasoned Italian bread
crumbs

3 large eggs

¼ cup finely grated Pecorino
Romano cheese, plus more for
serving

1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil,
plus more for serving
(continued)

1 tablespoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon freshly cracked black
pepper

Prepare the Sauce: Tear 5 basil leaves in half; reserve the rest. Combine the torn basil, olive oil, garlic and red-pepper flakes (if using) in a small saucepan and cook over very low heat for 10 minutes, allowing the basil and garlic to steep in the oil. (Do not let the garlic get beyond medium brown in color.) Remove from the heat, strain the oil, discard the solids and set the infused oil aside.

In a large pot or Dutch oven, combine the crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, salt and pepper with 2 cups water and the infused oil. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, then immediately reduce to a simmer.

Partially cover the pot and simmer the sauce over medium-low heat, undisturbed, while you prepare the ricotta polpette.

Prepare the Polpette: In a large bowl, use a spatula to mix all the polpette ingredients until combined. (The mixture will be quite soft.) Wet your hands and pinch off approximately 2-tablespoon portions and roll them into balls between your palms. (They should each be about 2 inches wide.) Place each polpette on a baking sheet and repeat with the remaining mixture, making about 35 small balls.

Once all the polpette have been rolled, bring the sauce to a boil and carefully drop them into the sauce. Shimmy the pot back and forth gently, after each addition, to make room and to prevent the polpette from sticking to the bottom of the pot or to each other. Do not stir, as the balls will break apart.

Cover the pot with a lid and leave the polpette in the sauce, undisturbed, for 4 minutes (longer if refrigerated). Remove the lid and shimmy the pot again. They will have begun to firm up. Cover the pot again and cook for another 10 minutes, until they are firm, plump and cooked through.

Carefully remove the polpette to a plate, topping them with spoonfuls of sauce, or transfer the polpette and sauce to a shallow serving bowl. Chop the remaining basil and sprinkle on top, and garnish with more grated cheese.

Orzo With Spinach and Feta

Yield: 4 servings

By Melissa Clark

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

4 large scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced

2 large garlic cloves, minced

8 ounces baby spinach leaves (8 cups), coarsely chopped

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1³/₄ cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable stock

1 cup orzo

1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest (from 1 lemon)

1 cup crumbled feta (4 ounces), plus more for garnish

½ cup frozen peas

1 cup chopped fresh dill, or use parsley or cilantro

Heat a 10-inch skillet over medium, then melt butter, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Stir in about three-quarters of the scallions (saving some of the green parts for garnish) and garlic, and cook until softened, stirring frequently, about 3 minutes.

Stir in spinach, adding in batches if it doesn't all fit in the pan at once, and ½ teaspoon salt. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until spinach is wilted, about 5 minutes.

Stir in stock and bring to a simmer. Stir in orzo, lemon zest and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Cover and simmer over medium-low heat until orzo is nearly cooked through and most of the liquid is absorbed, 10 to 14 minutes, stirring once or twice.

Stir in cheese, peas (if you like) and dill, cover the pan, and cook for another 1 minute, to finish cooking and warm the peas. To serve, sprinkle with more cheese and the reserved scallions.

Spaghetti-Ricotta Pie

6 oz. spaghetti, cooked

2 Tbsp. olive oil

2 eggs, well beaten

1/2 cup (2 oz.) Shredded Parmesan Cheese

3/4 cup (3 oz.) Shredded Mozzarella - Traditional Cut, divided

1 cup Whole Milk Ricotta Cheese

1 cup pasta sauce

Toss spaghetti with olive oil in large bowl. Stir in eggs and 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese. Pour spaghetti mixture into greased 10-inch pie plate; form into a crust.

Spoon Ricotta cheese over spaghetti crust. Top with pasta sauce. Bake in preheated 350°F oven 25 minutes. Top with half of the Mozzarella cheese. Bake 5 minutes more or until cheese is melted. Sprinkle with remaining Mozzarella cheese. Cool 10 minutes before cutting.

Asparagus-Feta Pasta

Yield: 2 servings

4 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling

1 cup plain Greek yogurt

1/2 cup frozen green peas, thawed

3 garlic cloves (1 large finely grated or minced, 2 thinly sliced)

1 teaspoon kosher salt (Diamond Crystal), plus more as needed

5 ounces short pasta, such as campanelle, shells, fusilli or orecchiette

1/4 teaspoon red-pepper flakes, plus more to taste

8 to 12 ounces asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1/2-inch pieces

4 ounces feta, crumbled into large chunks

Juice of 1/2 lemon to taste

1/2 cup mint leaves, torn

1 large scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced

In the bowl of a food processor or blender, combine 3 1/2 tablespoons olive oil, the yogurt, 1/3 cup peas, the grated garlic and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Pulse until

the sauce is no longer chunky, scraping the sides with a rubber spatula. Transfer to a large bowl and set aside.

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to boil. Add pasta and cook until al dente according to the package directions. Drain.

While the pasta is boiling, add the sliced garlic to a large skillet, along with the remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon red-pepper flakes and a big pinch of salt, and place over medium heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the garlic turns golden at the edges, 2 to 5 minutes.

Add the asparagus and remaining $\frac{1}{3}$ cup peas to the skillet and sauté until just cooked through, 2 to 3 minutes. If the pan looks dry, add a tablespoon or two of water.

After draining, add the warm pasta to the yogurt mixture in batches, stirring in between, so the sauce doesn't curdle. Stir in the asparagus mixture, feta, remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon red-pepper flakes and the lemon juice. Taste and add more salt, red-pepper flakes, or lemon juice if needed. Drizzle with olive oil, garnish with mint leaves and scallions, and serve warm.

