Pasta e Piselli in Bianco
(Pasta & Peas White)









Pasta e Piselli is a classic Italian comfort food that has been passed down through generations. This simple, delicious dish combines tender peas, pasta, onions, garlic, olive oil, and Parmesan cheese to create a flavorful meal without tomato sauce.

Traditionally prepared in Italian households, especially in Southern Italy, Pasta e Piselli was an economical meal made with ingredients commonly found in the kitchen. Every family had its own version, but the secret was always allowing the peas to simmer slowly to develop their natural sweetness.

This recipe was one my grandfather, who was from the Campania region of Italy, made often; my grandmother was from Calabria, and she would make it with tomato sauce.

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES | COOK TIME: 25 - 30 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

- One pound of ditalini or elbow pasta
- Two 15 oz cans of peas (drained); you can use frozen peas too
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- One medium onion (finely chopped)
- Three cloves of garlic (minced)
- 1 cup of water
- 1 cup of pasta water
- 1 cup Pecorino Romano or Parmesan cheese (freshly grated)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large, deep skillet or saucepan, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and cook for approximately 5 – 7 minutes until soft and translucent. Add the minced garlic and cook for another minute, being careful not to let it brown.
2. Add the peas to the pan and stir to coat them with the olive oil, onions, and garlic. Season with salt and black pepper. Add 1 cup of water and allow the peas to simmer gently for 10 – 15 minutes until tender.
3. Bring a large pot of salt water to a boil. Cook the pasta until it is just short of al dente. Before draining, reserve 1 – 2 cups of the starchy pasta water.
4. Add the drained pasta directly to the skillet with the peas. Pour in approximately 1 cup of reserved pasta water and stir gently over medium-low heat. Continue cooking for 2 – 3 minutes, adding additional pasta water as needed. The starch from the pasta will combine with the olive oil and broth to create a light, silky sauce.
5. Remove the pan from the heat. Stir in the grated Pecorino Romano or Parmesan cheese.
6. Toss until everything is well combined. Add more pasta water if necessary to keep the pasta moist and creamy.
7. Finish with additional grated cheese, freshly ground black pepper, and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.

Serve immediately with crusty Italian bread.