



By Pamela Manley

I suppose I can thank Marco Polo for popularizing one of my favorite comfort foods...pasta. In fact, the Chinese and Arabians as well as Italians claim the origin of pasta.¹ Though regardless of its origins, pasta has made a huge impact on the American plate.

Pasta is dried to preserve it for future use. This practice was first introduced in Italy between the 9th and 11th centuries by Arabs who were occupying the area.ⁱⁱ Even today, dried pasta made is the preferred pasta in the United States. Imported dried pasta is considered to be of better quality as it is made with semolina flour. Semolina does not absorb as much water and cooks well.ⁱⁱⁱ

But the first official sign of the pasta that we know today came from an Italian notary's record of a "bariscela (basket) full of macaronis" in 1297. From this time and through the 16th century, pasta making spread. In 1574, the Corporation of Pasta Makers was founded in Genoa, Italy. The organization even held competitions for the making of pasta.^{iv}

The aspirings of technology came in the 17th century with the invention of a mechanical press to aid in the kneading of the dough. And as progress came, the machines developed. In 1740, Paolo Adami was allowed to open the first pasta factory in Venice.^v

But, one cannot live on pasta alone. In the 1800's, pasta seemed to forge its undying devotion to the tomato. Previously thought to be dangerous or even deadly, tomatoes were made into simple sauces that not only adorned pasta but the infamous pizza as well.^{vi}



In the 19th century, innovation abounded. Die makers created

disk that would allow for differing shapes of pasta. One company boasted to have a range of 150 to 200 varying shapes.^{vii}

Since its original inception, pasta has served as a base for many sauces, such as the simple marinara. (Shown at the beginning of the article.) Pairing pasta with a sauce and even a protein of choice has become a staple of the American diet. One reason for this may be the simple ease in preparation. Several of the more popular pasta dishes are modular in construction for the average consumer. A myriad of tomato sauces are available as well as fresh and canned cream sauces.

From lasagna to macaroni to spaghetti, pasta will be a part of our diet for years to come!

Shrimp Marinara

By Chef Dann Reid
Andrews 228

- 2 oz Angel hair -- al dente
- 3 oz marinara sauce
- 1 T. olive oil
- 1 t. parsley -- chopped
- 4 large shrimp -- grilled

Prepare angel hair al dente.

Warm marinara in a sauce pan.

Grill shrimp.

Toss angel hair with olive oil, parsely and salt and pepper to taste.

Spin angel hair on a carving fork to make a large bundle. Lay in pasta bowl.

Spoon marinara around pasta bundle.

Lay grilled shrimp around bundle on top of marinara. Garnish with a fresh herb (i.e., chervil)

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 404 Calories; 17g Fat (37.2% calories from fat); 13g Protein; 50g Carbohydrate; 3g Dietary Fiber; 36mg Cholesterol; 391mg Sodium. Exchanges: 3 1/2 Grain (Starch); 1/2 Lean Meat; 0 Vegetable; 3 1/2 Fat.

NOTES : This recipe was prepared one day when a native Italian came into the restaurant. Though the dish was not on the menu, it was prepared to order and the guest was pleased.

Images courtesy:

Pamela Manley

<http://web.foodnetwork.com/food/web/encyclopedia/termdetail/0,7770,3243,00.html>

ⁱhttp://www.professionalpasta.it/dir_9/1_whoinv.htm

ⁱⁱ<http://www.barilla.com>

ⁱⁱⁱ<http://web.foodnetwork.com/food/web/encyclopedia/termdetail/0,7770,3243,00.html>

^{iv}<http://www.lapiazzaonline.com/pasta.htm>

^v<http://www.lapiazzaonline.com/pasta.htm>

^{vi}<http://www.lapiazzaonline.com/pasta.htm>

^{vii}<http://www.lapiazzaonline.com/pasta.htm>

Pasta...
It's just
not for
dinner
anymore...