

Spaghetti all' assassina

Spaghetti all' assassina originated at the end of the 1960s at Al Sorso Preferito, a restaurant in Bari's city center. They still serve the dish today.

1. Prepare a broth made with water (1 liter), 500ml tomato passata and 150g of tomato purée. Season to taste and bring to a boil. According to the Academy of Spaghetti all'Assassina (there is such a thing), the sauce "must be bright red and tasty, but still a broth."

2. Pour a generous glug of extra virgin olive oil into the pan. Add 1 clove of chopped garlic, 1 clove whole garlic slightly flattened using the flat of a kitchen knife, and a sprinkle of dried red pepper flakes. Heat over a high heat until the garlic sizzles, but don't let it burn and get bitter. Add the remaining cup of tomato purée into the pan and spread across the bottom.

3. Drop the dry spaghetti in the pan and spread into an even layer distributing them so that the pasta collects the sauce evenly. The first step is to step back. Let the pasta caramelize and blacken slightly before flipping it over to do the same on the other side. Use your ears and nose. Listen for the sizzle and smell the smokiness.

4. When the pasta has been seared and slightly burned on both sides, pour 2 medium-sized ladles of the tomato broth over the pasta. The liquid will sizzle and start to simmer. Let it reduce without turning the spaghetti and listen carefully for the boiling point. When you hear it sizzle again (the noise changes sharply) remain patient and wait for the burning process to continue (this will take 30 seconds to 1 one minute).

5. At this point the pasta can be stirred slightly. It should remain quite stiff. Repeat, stirring to remove the burnt spaghetti from the bottom of the pan while adding more tomato liquid. Each addition must correspond to the time needed for it to sizzle and then repeat by soaking the pasta with the sauce. The stiff spaghetti will start to bend. The spaghetti must then "be killed".

You may need to add some more olive oil to the spaghetti to help it on its way. Clumps of burned pasta can be separated by stirring and turning the pasta. The pasta shouldn't swell as it does when boiled. But it should be cooked through.

Serve immediately, while hot and fiery. Drizzle with some olive oil for extra pepperiness.

Thanks to Scott Maxwell at [The Gay Puglia Podcast](#) for providing the recipe.