

HOW TO MAKE HOMEMADE SPINACH PASTA

INGREDIENTS

6 ounces fresh spinach
2 large eggs
1 large egg yolk
2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
Coarse salt

DIRECTIONS

Add 2 inches of water to a medium saucepan, and fit with a steamer insert. Bring to a simmer. Add 6 ounces spinach, cover, and steam until bright green and softened, about 2 minutes. Let cool slightly. Squeeze out liquid using a clean kitchen towel or paper towels. Puree spinach in a food processor (you should have about 1/2 cup puree).

Add eggs and yolk to puree in food processor, and process until combined. Add flour and 1 heaping teaspoon salt, and process until dough just comes together, about 20 seconds.

Transfer dough to a well-floured surface. Knead until smooth and elastic, 5 to 10 minutes, adding up to 2 tablespoons flour if dough is too sticky. Place on a piece of parchment, and cover with an inverted bowl, or wrap tightly in plastic; let rest for 1 to 2 hours. At this point, the pasta dough can be refrigerated for up to 24 hours. Let it come back to room temperature before rolling.

Divide the dough into four equal portions. Dust the portions with flour and cover with a clean dishtowel. From this point on, keep everything well-floured to prevent the pasta from sticking to itself or the roller as you work. If the dough starts to feel sticky as you roll it, sprinkle it with flour. Also sprinkle flour on any pasta you're not working (rolled, cut or otherwise) with and keep it covered with a dishtowel.

Set your pasta machine to the thickest setting (usually marked "1"). Flatten one piece of dough into a thick disk between your hands and feed it through the pasta roller. Repeat once or twice. Fold this piece of dough into thirds, like folding a letter, and press it between your hands again. With the pasta machine still on the widest setting, feed the pasta crosswise between the rollers (see picture). Feed it through once or twice more until smooth.

Begin changing the settings on your roller to roll the pasta thinner and thinner. Roll the pasta two or three times at each setting, and don't skip settings (the pasta tends to snag and warp if you do). If the pasta gets too long to be manageable, lay it on a cutting board and slice it in half. Roll the pasta as thin as you like to go. For linguine and fettuccine, I normally go to 6 or maybe a 7. For spaghetti, I go to an 8.

Cut the long stretch of dough into noodle-length sheets, usually about 12-inches. If making filled pasta or lasagna, proceed with shaping. If cutting into noodles, switch from the pasta roller to the noodle cutter, and run the sheet of pasta through the cutter. Toss the noodles with a little flour to keep them from sticking and gather them into a loose basket and cover with a towel while you finish rolling and cutting the rest of the dough.

To Cook the pasta: Bring a large pot of water to a boil, salt the water, and cook the pasta until al dente, 4-5 minutes.