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Bucatini all' Amatriciana

This is a very traditional sauce which comes from the town of Amatrice in the far north of Lazio just south of Rome. This is an area which is famous for its excellent pork products such as sausages. My recipe is very typical of the area, a succulent, rich meat sauce with a hint of chilli.

200g Squisito guanciale or pancetta cubed (or fresh Napoli sausage)

1 x 400g can chopped Italian tomatoes or 525g fresh tomatoes

1/2 glass wine vinegar and red wine mixed

45ml extra virgin olive oil

1 onion, finely chopped

1 teaspoon Squisito peperoncino or 1/2 to 1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped and a few fresh herbs

300g dried bucatini pasta or 400g fresh Squisito bigoli

75g freshly grated Pecorino Amatrice or Pecorino Romano DOP

If using fresh tomatoes blanch in boiling water then plunge into cold water and peel off the skin. Deseed and cut into thin slices.

Fry the cheek or pancetta in oil until browned then add the glass of wine mixture/vinegar and allow to boil over low heat. Add the onion and peperoncino to the pan and continue to fry together gently until the onion is soft and translucent. If using fresh Napoli sausage squeeze out the sausage from the casing into the pan and sauté with the veg and use mixed herbs instead of peperoncino. Add the tomatoes and simmer covered for 20 minutes, stirring frequently.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta in a large pan until al dente, warming your plates on the pan in the meanwhile. Drain pasta thoroughly and add to the sauce. Pour the pasta into the sauce and whisk in a good handful of Pecorino Romano cheese then serve immediately.

Serves: 4

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