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Pasta al Genovese

When we visit Genova the first thing we eat is *pasta al genovese* in a rough and ready café opposite our hotel. Unlike the English method of serving, the Genovese serve their pasta and pesto quite liquid with a ladle or two of boiling pasta water which melts the Parmigiano and spreads the basil "so it looks like the Milky Way at night". At home we make our pesto fresh daily with a good grating of Parmigiano Reggiano and Pecorino Romano, or Grana Padano DOP if the basil needs a creamier taste. When we get a glut of basil we make quantities since pesto freezes well and there's nothing better to remind you of those lost Summer days!

1 x 100g deli pot Squisito Fresh Pesto Genovese
400 - 500g Squisito casarecce, Mandilli de Sea (pasta squares) or spaghetti
2 potatoes, cut in batons
50 -100g French or climbing beans
knob of butter to fry
a splash of olive oil
sea salt & pepper
75g Parmigiano Reggiano or Grana Padano and Pecorino Romano or
Lincolnshire Poacher cheese, grated to angel's hair
4 ladles of hot pasta water

Bring your pasta water up to the boil and add a level teaspoon of sea salt. Toss in the pasta, potatoes and beans and cook with the lid off until al dente (with a bit of bite to the pasta but no white showing in the middle). Drain the pasta and vegetables then toss with a splash of olive oil and divide into warm bowls. Top each dish with a spoon of pesto and a liberal sprinkle of Parmigiano Reggiano or Lincolnshire Poacher cheese, then pour over a ladle of the hot cooking water to melt cheese and season the dish.
Serves 4 people.

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