
RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Pasta & Chickpeas

If ever there was an Italian family dish that typifies *'cucina povera'* (peasant food) it's *pasta e ceci* which will fill the fattest and hungriest stomach. Often served with



tomatoes, salt cod, basil, rosemary, onions, even cotechino and pecorino, this is the stripped down version *'alla Romana'* from Rome.

With the ubiquitous tinned cooked chickpea pasta e ceci is one that can be cooked up easily from the storecupboard and you can customise it with a nice Tuscan or Napoli sausage or a stolen specimen branch of rosemary or a wonderful Tropea onion in season.

extra virgin olive oil
20 cloves of garlic (I don't use less than 20)

8-12 bay leaves
600g fresh maltagliati (flat trapezoid hankerchiefs) or ditaloni rigati (thick ribbed tubes)
8 tins of tinned chickpeas
vegetable stock cubes
Trapani sea salt (if not using stock cubes)
freshly ground black pepper

If using tinned chickpeas, bring to the boil with the garlic and bay leaves in a pasta pot three-quarters full of water. Simmer for at least an hour, then add chickpeas.

If using chickpeas you've soaked yourself with a good pinch of bicarbonate of soda to help soften them up, simmer them in fresh water with the garlic, bay leaves until tender.

When you've got your chickpeas, bring the chickpeas (tinned or home-cooked) to the boil again, adding more water if necessary.

Add stock cubes, salt, pepper and taste. When the broth is to your liking, add the pasta and continue cooking until it's *al dente*. Add a few good splashes of extra virgin olive oil and serve.

This is a hearty dish and should be almost thick enough to stand your spoon in.

In our family we like to serve with lots of freshly ground black pepper.

Serves 8. Takes about 30 mins prep and 2 1/2hrs cooking.

To download this recipe go to www.squisito-deli.co.uk
