

Recipe

Pasta e Ceci alla Romana – Roman-Style Pasta & Chickpeas

Ingredients:

- 2 cups of canned chickpeas (keep the liquid)
- 2 sprigs of fresh rosemary—rough-chopped
- 2 whole cloves of garlic—peeled/smashed.
- 2 anchovy fillets (oil-cured)
- ½ teaspoon of crushed red pepper flake (aka dried peperoncino)
- extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup **Ditalini** pasta – cooked until *al dente*
- 1 ¼ cup of vegetable broth
- 1-2 rinds of Parmigiano-Reggiano
- 1/3 cup of fresh-grated Pecorino Romano cheese
- salt / pepper

Directions:

- Heat (over medium) 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a deep saucepan or Dutch oven. Let the oil heat up for 90 seconds to 2 minutes. ((If you eat meat, you can rend some sliced pancetta or guanciale in the oil, too)).
- Smash the unpeeled garlic cloves with the flat side of your knife. Remove the papery-skin and keep the cloves whole or in large chunks.
- Add in the smashed cloves to the heated-up oil. Stir in the chopped rosemary and crushed red pepper flakes. Cook for 2 minutes until aromatic.
- Mix the anchovy fillets into the oil flavored with garlic/rosemary/chili flake. Cook for another 90 seconds—until the anchovies begin to break down and fall apart.
- Pour in the cooked chickpeas and the reserved chickpea water (aka aqua fava). Add in the vegetable broth, Parmigiano rinds and the dry ditalini. Turn up the heat, allowing it to bubble and simmer. Cook uncovered for 6-7minutes.
- Turn off the heat. Take out/discard the Parmigiano rinds. Put a lid on the pasta/broth/chickpeas. Let it rest for 4-5 minutes, allowing the pasta to absorb up some of the savory and seasoned broth.
- Ladle the pasta-and-chickpeas (plus some of the broth) into a bowl.
- Drizzle with a bit of extra-virgin olive oil. Dust with fresh-cracked black pepper and a spoonful of Pecorino Romano cheese before serving.



Chef Chris Atwood's Notes:

Most places in Italy have regional specialties you'll only find there—like Venice's "cicchetti" (tapas) or Rome's wine-braised oxtail (aka "coda alla vaccinara"). But, some dishes span multiple regions—with local tweaks varying from town to town, nonna to nonna.

***Pasta e ceci** (literally "pasta and chickpeas") in one such dish across Central and Southern Italy. It's a rustic, hearty staple — easily prepared with simple ingredients but never lacking in flavor. While some versions of this dish include canned tomatoes or tomato pasta, Roman cooks keep their **pasta e ceci** simple: pasta + chickpeas + seasoned broth + rosemary + grated cheese.*

If you don't have parmigiano rinds in your fridge, you can often buy them from your local cheese shop or just save the rinds from future hunks of cheese to season your soups, broths, and ragùs. For a creamier twist on this recipe, blend ½ cup of the chickpeas with ½ cup of the broth. Then, toss the finished pasta e ceci with the creamy chickpea puree just before serving.

