

## Brilliant Bolognese: Boakesey

Years ago, a friend of mine separated from his wife. I lived nearby and, felt sorry for him as I knew that he couldn't cook. I started taking him a home-made casserole each week, which he could keep in the fridge and microwave a portion at a time. It would last him 3 or 4 days, I thought, and save him from having to rely on 'tv dinner.'

One day, my pal told me that whilst he was extremely grateful for my help and support, he had started learning to cook so he would not have to be a burden on me anymore. By way of a 'thank you', he invited me round to his house for dinner to show off his new skills.

He'd really pushed the boat out - even a tablecloth and some wine. He left me sipping *Liebfraumilch* whilst he pottered about in his kitchen. Pots and pans clattered and clunked, but eventually, he returned, carrying a couple of covered serving dishes, plus condiments, all carefully arranged on a tray, complete with doilies (remember them)?

We were having pasta, he said, with Bolognese - a tasty and popular dish then, (as now,) but in those days, there were no such things as ready-made sauces; everything had to be made from scratch.

Mouth-watering aromas of Italian food were teasing my tastebuds. Then, my friend removed the lids from the serving dishes, revealing vivid turquoise spaghetti.

Unusual, I thought, but far worse was to come...

To impress me, he'd decided to liven up the meal with some colourful brilliance! As well as the blue spaghetti, loads of bright green colouring went into the Bolognese. Now Bolognese is reddish, or brownish, so the addition of the green colouring simply did not work. The main course looked like some days-old mouldy mush. I felt really sorry and I told him it smelled wonderful, which was true, then helped myself to a miniscule portion out of politeness.

Seriously, the only way I could eat the food was with my eyes closed. He thought that was a sign of my appreciation. I never had the heart to tell him the truth. I even had seconds as it did taste rather good, once you overcame the nausea-inducing view.

We stayed friends for decades, until he died, but since that day I have never, ever, eaten spaghetti Bolognese and never will.