

Italian Pasta

CHEF Q CATERING



The History

Nothing says Italy like its food, and nothing says Italian food like pasta. Wherever Italians immigrated they have brought their pasta along, so much so today it can be considered a staple of international cuisine. Unlike other ubiquitous Italian products like pizza and tomato sauce, which have a fairly recent history, pasta may have a much older pedigree, going back hundreds -if not thousands- of years. Unravelling the long and often complex history of this dish we have to look at its origins and some of the myths surrounding it.

19th century Maccaronaro selling pasta.

Many schoolchildren were taught that the Venetian merchant Marco Polo brought back pasta from his journeys to China. Some may have also learnt that Polo's was not a discovery, but rather a rediscovery of product once popular in Italy among the Etruscans and the Romans. Well, Marco Polo might have done amazing things on his journeys, but bringing pasta to Italy was not one of them: noodles were already there in Polo's time.

There is indeed evidence of an Etrusco-Roman noodle made from the same durum wheat used to produce modern pasta: it was called "lagane" (origin of the modern word for lasagna). However this type of food, first mentioned in the 1st century AD, was not boiled, as it is usually done today, but ovenbaked. Ancient lagane had some similarities with modern pasta, but cannot be considered quite the same. The country will have to wait a few centuries for its most popular dish to make a further culinary leap forward.

Spaghetti (at the time called macaroni) drying in the streets of Naples, circa 1895.

Like so much of southern Italian life, the Arabic invasions of the 8th century heavily influenced regional cuisine. Today, the presence of Arabic people in the south of the peninsula during the Middle Ages is considered the most likely reason behind the diffusion of pasta.

The modern word "macaroni" derives from the Sicilian term for kneading dough with energy, as early pasta making was often a laborious, day-long process. How these early dishes were served is not truly known, but many Sicilian pasta recipes still include typically middle eastern ingredients, such as raisins and cinnamon, which may be witness to original, medieval recipes.

This early pasta was an ideal staple for Sicily and it easily spread to the mainland since durum wheat thrives in Italy's climate. Italy is still a major producer of this hard wheat, used to make the all-important semolina flour.

By the 1300's dried pasta was very popular for its nutrition and long shelf life, making it ideal for long ship voyages. Pasta made it around the globe during the voyages of discovery a century later. By that time different shapes of pasta have appeared and new technology made pasta easier to make. With these innovations pasta truly became a part of Italian life. However the next big advancement in the history of pasta would not come until the 19th century when pasta met tomatoes.

The Menu



Antipasti Station

- Antipasti Tray – rolled Italian meats, cheeses, marinated vegetables
- Crudit  with Dip – Assorted cut raw vegetables
- Tomato Basil Bruschetta

Pasta

- Penne with our Traditional red sauce
- Bowtie with homemade white sauce
- Meatballs & Italian Sausage

More Pasta

- Southwest Pasta – roasted red peppers and mushrooms sauteed in olive oil with Italian sausage, garlic and parmesan cheese tossed with penne noodles
- Pollo Penne – saut ed chicken breast with button mushrooms and fresh roma tomatoes tossed with penne pasta in a pesto cream sauce
- Cheese Ravioli – pasta pillows stuffed with ricotta and parmesan cheeses and smothered in a tomato cream sauce

Carving Station

- Choose from chef carved Sugar Cured Ham, Smoked Turkey Breast, or Roast Beef
- Served with fresh baked rolls and condiments
- Choose Beef Tenderloin or Prime Rib +\$4/person

Hot Hors d' oeuvres

- Spinach & Artichoke Dip with crisp pita chips
- Stuffed mushroom caps
- Chicken amaggio morso

Cheese Board

- Cubed cheddar, Swiss, and pepper jack cheeses
- Fruit Stilton
- Sundried Tomato Pate
- Assorted breads and crackers

The Desserts and Drinks

Dolce Platter

Tiramisu, Double Dark Chocolate Cake, Homemade Cheesecake and Italian Crème Cake.

Non-Alcoholic Sangria

Drink Recipe: Kumquat Spritzer

Sparkling Rosemary Limeade

The Packages



Party for 20 includes 2hrs. Chef, 3 stations dessert platter and drinks \$ 700.00 plus tax and gratuity

Party for 30 includes 2hrs chef , 4 stations dessert platters and drinks \$ 1,050.00 plus tax and gratuity.

Party for 40 includes 2hrs. Chef, 1 server 4 stations, dessert platter and drinks \$ 1,400.00 plus tax and gratuity.

Party for 50 includes 2 hrs. chef, 1 server 4 stations, dessert platter and drinks \$ 1,750.00 plus tax and gratuity.

Alcoholic beverages will be extra + bartender fees depending on the packages size and cost of alcohol. Servers are \$ 100.00 extra. All silverware, glassware, napkins and ceramic plates included on the price

The looks

