



Spaghetti alle Vongole al Cartoccio

Spaghetti alle vongole is *the* classic Italian clam dish. Vongole means 'clam' in Italian and I use the small South Australian vongole that are closest to Italy's vongole veraci, but you can use any clams or other bivalve for this dish, including mussels. Of course you can cook spaghetti alle vongole without the parcel, just stir the pasta in the sauce for a few minutes until it's al dente, adding a little more cooking water if necessary to keep it moist, then add the clams and stir for 30 seconds longer to heat through.

Serves 6 as a starter



INGREDIENTS

- 500g spaghetti
- ⅔ cup extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1kg vongole, purged
- Pinch dried chilli flakes
- 2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 1 lemon

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 200°C.
2. Lay out 6 sheets of baking paper (4 if serving as a main course) about 60cm long.
3. Bring a large saucepan of well-salted water to the boil (10g salt/litre of water).
4. Add spaghetti and cook for about 6 minutes (two-thirds of the cooking time on the packet), it should be almost tender but still a little chalky in the centre.
5. Meanwhile, place oil and garlic in a large frying pan over medium heat and stir for about 2 minutes, until it starts to sizzle.
6. Increase heat, add wine and vongole, stir and cover.
7. Cook for a couple of minutes, shaking the pan occasionally, until the shells start to open.
8. As each shell opens, use tongs to remove it to a bowl.
9. Once most shells have opened, remove any unopened ones from the pan and pry them open over the sink with a blunt knife, if they smell good, add them to the others, if not, discard them.
10. Set frying pan aside.
11. Once spaghetti is ready, return frying pan to medium heat and use tongs to lift spaghetti out of the water into the pan; reserving the cooking water.
12. Add a couple of tablespoons of the cooking water to the pan, add vongole, chilli and parsley and grate the lemon zest over the top.
13. Increase heat to high and toss for a minute or so to combine well.
14. Divide pasta, clams and sauce between the waiting baking paper – making a hollow in the pasta to pour in the sauce and piling the clams on top.
15. Fold the paper into parcels, by making double folds at the top and sides, leaving room for the hot air to expand (see photo).
16. Place on a baking tray, tucking the folded sides of the parcel under to secure them so that steam and juices can't escape.
17. Place in the oven for 4 minutes.
18. Place each parcel into a shallow bowl and serve immediately.