

STUDY ON THE DIVERSITY OF PASTA DISHES IN WORLD CUISINE

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***Abstract:** In global gastronomy, pasta is no longer just a food, but an element of cultural and artistic expression. From traditional spaghetti alla carbonara and lasagna alla bolognese to innovative contemporary creations with exotic ingredients, pasta has the ability to absorb diverse influences while retaining its identity. Whether prepared in rustic recipes with simple tomato sauces and aromatic herbs, or as part of elaborate gastronomic compositions accompanied by fine wines and artistically presented, pasta demonstrates a versatility rarely found in the culinary world.*

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the diversity and use of pasta in international gastronomic dishes. By analyzing the role of pasta in gastronomy, the paper aims to highlight the importance of this product both as a nutritional element and as a symbol of universal culinary art.

Keywords: *pasta, gastronomy, culinary tradition, dishes*

INTRODUCTION

Since ancient times, pasta has played a significant role in human nutrition, being appreciated for its ease of preparation, nutritional properties, and versatility in a wide variety of recipes. Considered by many historians to have originated in Asia, more specifically in ancient China, pasta traveled along important trade routes and was adopted by various civilizations, each contributing to its refinement and diversification. Once it arrived in Europe, and especially in Italy, pasta became not only a staple food, but also a cultural symbol, defining Mediterranean cuisine over time. [3, 4]

Essentially, pasta is a product obtained by combining flour, especially durum wheat, with water or water, sometimes enriched with natural ingredients for color and flavor, such as spinach, cuttlefish ink or tomatoes. The diversity of shapes, sizes and preparation techniques has contributed to the emergence of an extremely diverse culinary universe, where pasta can be found in simple, everyday dishes, but also in sophisticated recipes, served in prestigious restaurants around the world. [1, 3, 5]

Due to their nutritional value, pasta is an important source of complex carbohydrates, which are essential for providing daily energy. It is also easily digestible and can support a balanced diet when combined with high-quality protein and fresh vegetables. Over time, modern technologies have allowed for the improvement of production processes, so that today pasta can be found in a variety of formulas adapted to different dietary requirements, including for people with gluten intolerance or those who follow a vegan diet. [1, 3]

The raw material used in pasta production is of major importance in defining the final characteristics of the product and the economic performance of the entire food industry. The quality of the raw materials directly determines the taste, texture, nutritional value and market acceptability of the pasta. [2] World production of durum wheat is concentrated in areas with a hot, dry climate, such as Italy, Canada, the United States, and Australia. [6] In 2024, EU countries produced 6 million tons of pasta, an increase of % over the previous year. More than two-thirds (69%) of all pasta was produced in Italy,

totaling 4.1 million tons. Italy, in particular, has a long tradition of growing durum wheat and manufacturing pasta, and is the European and world leader in pasta exports. [7, 8]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The aim of this paper is to analyze the variety and uses of pasta in international cuisine. In preparing this study, the authors consulted an extensive bibliography, including scientific publications, brochures, and specialized websites. The methodology used combines classic research methods—documentation, analysis, and synthesis of information—with the formulation of conclusions based on the data collected..

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Pasta has a fascinating history that reflects the evolution of human civilizations, cultural exchanges, and technological innovations. Although today it is mainly associated with Italy, the origins of pasta can be found in many parts of the world, sometimes independently of each other.

“Spaghetti alla Carbonara” is an iconic dish from the Lazio region, with roots dating back to post-war Italy. The authentic recipe includes spaghetti, guanciale (made from pork jowl), eggs, Pecorino Romano cheese, and black pepper. The preparation involves frying the guanciale until crispy, then mixing the hot pasta with guanciale, eggs, and grated pecorino, with the sauce forming due to the heat of the pasta. Its characteristic taste comes from the balance between salty, creamy, and slightly spicy, and the creaminess is achieved without cream, only from eggs and cheese. It is a classic example of a simple but intensely flavored dish, representing the refinement of traditional Italian cuisine [1, 10]

“Lasagna alla Bolognese” is one of the most famous Italian dishes, originating in the Emilia-Romagna region, more precisely in Bologna. The dish consists of alternating layers of lasagna sheets (made from flour and eggs), ragù sauce (beef and pork, tomatoes, onions, celery, carrots, wine, milk), béchamel sauce, and grated Parmesan cheese. The assembly involves baking in the oven so that the flavors blend together and the sauces penetrate the sheets. [1, 11]

“Spaghetti Cacio e Pepe” is one of the oldest and purest dishes in Roman cuisine, dating back to the pastoral times of the Lazio region. Its name, which translates to "cheese and pepper," reflects the simplicity of the ingredients available to shepherds in rural areas. The traditional recipe is based on spaghetti, grated Pecorino Romano cheese, and freshly ground black pepper, and the balance between the spiciness of the pepper and the salty taste of the cheese is the goal of the recipe. [1, 9]

“Penne all'Arrabbiata” is a recipe from the Lazio region of Italy, and in particular from the city of Rome, consisting of short penne pasta covered with a sauce of tomatoes, garlic, and hot peppers, which gives it its spicy character, giving it the name "arrabbiata" ("angry"). The dish is simple, quick, and flavorful, highlighting the quality of the basic ingredients: extra virgin olive oil, ripe tomatoes, and natural spices. It is usually served with fresh parsley and, optionally, grated Pecorino cheese, and is appreciated for its intense flavor and al dente texture, characteristic of Italian cuisine. [12, 13]

“Trofie al Pesto Genovese” originates from Liguria, Italy, where trofie (short twisted pasta) is handmade from durum wheat flour and water. It is combined with pesto Genovese, a sauce made by crushing fresh basil, pine nuts, garlic, Parmesan, and pecorino cheese, to which extra virgin olive oil is added. The dish represents the use of local Mediterranean ingredients and traditional preservation methods. [1, 9]



Spaghetti Cacio e Pepe

Source:

https://www.eataly.com/us_en/magazine/recipes/pasta-recipes/pasta-cacio-pepe



Penne all'Arrabbiata

Source:

<https://www.recipesfromitaly.com/penne-allarrabbiata/>



Trofie al Pesto Genovese

Source:

<https://www.recipesfromitaly.com/trofie-al-pesto/>

“**Orecchiette**” with turnip leaves, also called “*recchitelle*” or “*strascinati*”, is one of the most emblematic dishes of Puglia, especially in the province of Bari, Italy. This main course is sometimes prepared using other ingredients instead of turnip leaves, such as broccoli or tomato sauce. The secret of the preparation lies in the correct boiling of the vegetables together with the pasta, where experience and knowledge of the ingredients allow for an optimal result. Orecchiette with turnip leaves brings a perfect balance between its rural simplicity and the intensity of taste, thanks to the carefully chosen ingredients and their distinctive aromas. [14, 15]

“**Tortellini in Brodo**” (tortellini in clear soup) is a traditional Italian dish, originating from the Emilia-Romagna region, documented since the 16th century. It consists of tortellini (small ring-shaped pasta) filled with meat or combinations of meat and cheese, cooked in a clear soup (broth) usually of beef. The preparation method involves rolling and sealing each piece by hand, following a technique traditionally passed down in the family. The dish is appreciated for the delicacy of the pasta and for the rich and comforting flavor of the soup, which balances the dense texture of the filled pasta. [16, 17]

“**Bucatini all'Amatriciana**” originated in the town of Amatrice, in the Lazio region, and derives from the Gricia recipe, to which tomatoes were added after the 18th century. Bucatini are long, thick pasta with a central hole, which are mixed with a sauce made from fried guanciale, tomatoes, and grated Pecorino Romano cheese. The preparation involves slow cooking of the meat to extract the flavor, followed by the addition of tomatoes and cooked pasta. It is served without any other additions. [1, 18]



Orecchiette alle Cime di Rapa

Source:

<https://blog.giallozafferano.it/dulcisinfor/no/orecchiette-cime-di-rapa/>



Tortellini in Brodo

Source:

<https://recetasdecocina.elmundo.es/2025/05/tortellini-in-brodo-receta-tradicional-de-sopa-italiana.html>



Bucatini all'Amatriciana

Source:

https://www.sidechef.com/recipes/62059/bucatini_allamatriciana/

“**Timballo di pasta**” or “**Pasta al Forno**”, known generically as “baked pasta,” is a dish with numerous regional variations in Italy, being particularly common in the south of the country on festive occasions and at family gatherings. To make this recipe, short pasta such as penne, rigatoni, or ziti is used, which is partially boiled and then combined with various sauces based on tomatoes, minced meat (often beef or pork), vegetables, and cheese (such as mozzarella or Parmesan). The mixture is layered in a dish and cheese is

added on top to form a golden crust after baking. The dish is baked in the oven until completely browned, then left to cool slightly before being cut into portions. [19, 20]

“Pasta all'Assassina” is a recipe originating in the Puglia region of southern Italy, which appeared in the second half of the 20th century. The name translates as "killer pasta" and refers to the unusual method of preparation and the intense, slightly burnt flavor that results from the technique used. Unlike classic Italian recipes, where the pasta is boiled separately and then combined with the sauce, this dish involves cooking the raw spaghetti directly in a large pan with a little olive oil and garlic, to which a very concentrated tomato and chili pepper sauce is gradually added. The pasta is cooked in a "risottato" style, gradually absorbing the liquid, and finally left on the heat until a crispy, slightly caramelized crust forms, giving the dish its distinctive taste. This dish is served hot as a first course and is considered a symbol of contemporary cuisine in Bari, appreciated for its intense flavor and distinctive texture, crispy on the outside and soft on the inside. [21, 22]

“Pastitsio” is an iconic dish of Greek cuisine, consisting of layers of tubular pasta, seasoned minced meat, and béchamel sauce. It is a layered pasta bake, similar to Italian lasagna, but with Oriental influences in terms of the meat sauce preparation. The recipe calls for the use of special long pasta (bucatini), partially cooked, which forms the base and top of the dish, and between these layers is a minced meat sauce (usually beef or lamb) cooked with tomatoes, onions, garlic, and spices such as cinnamon and nutmeg. The dish is finished with a layer of béchamel sauce thickened with egg and kefalotyri or graviera cheese, and then baked until a golden crust is formed. [23, 24]

“Youvetsi” is a traditional Greek dish with rural origins, cooked in the oven, which illustrates how Mediterranean cuisine makes the most of simple ingredients. The dish consists of meat (beef, lamb) slowly cooked in a tomato sauce with red wine, garlic, cinnamon, and cloves until the meat becomes very tender. Halfway through cooking, orzo (small pasta shaped like rice grains, also called kritharaki) is added to the clay pot, which absorbs the liquid and flavors of the sauce. The dish is finished in the oven so that the pasta becomes creamy, and graviera or kefalotyri cheese is added on top. [25, 26]

“Kushari” is considered Egypt's national dish, originating in Cairo in the late 19th century. This vegan recipe combines short pasta (usually macaroni or vermicelli), white rice, black lentils, and boiled chickpeas, all cooked separately and then mixed together when served. A spicy tomato sauce with garlic, vinegar, and spices (chili) is added on top, and finally, crispy fried onions are sprinkled on top. This dish is served in street restaurants in Egypt and is appreciated for its nutritional balance and low cost. [27, 28]

“Künefe” is a traditional Turkish dessert made from fine noodles (kadayif) and sweet or semi-salty cheese, baked until golden and crispy on the outside, but soft and chewy on the inside. After baking, the dessert is drizzled with sugar syrup flavored with rose water or lemon, which gives it a sweet and fragrant taste. It is often served warm, sprinkled with ground walnuts or pistachios, combining the crunchy texture of the noodles with the creaminess of the cheese and the sweetness of the syrup. Künefe is an emblematic example of Middle Eastern sweets, appreciated for the contrast between its textures and intense flavors. [29]

“Kataifi” is a variation of baklava, popular in Turkey, Greece, and the Middle East, which uses thin strands of filo pastry, similar to fine noodles. To prepare it, the kataifi strands are coated with melted butter, then layered in a baking tray, interspersed with walnuts, pistachios, or ground hazelnuts. The dessert is baked until golden and crispy, then flavored sugar syrup is added, either with lemon, rose water, or orange. Kataifi baklava is served at room temperature, cut into small pieces. [30, 31]

“Lokshen Kugel” is a traditional dessert of the Jewish community, originating in Central and Eastern Europe, where pasta-based dishes were adapted to local resources and religious dietary restrictions. The term "lokshen" refers to thin wheat noodles, while "kugel" refers to a type of baked pudding. The sweet version of Lokshen Kugel is made from boiled noodles combined with beaten eggs, sweet cottage cheese, sugar, raisins, cinnamon, sour cream, and melted butter. The mixture is baked in a pan until a golden crust forms and the inside becomes firm but slightly moist. This dessert is a versatile dish, often served on holidays, especially Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, or Hanukkah. [32]

Poppy seed and pasta cake (“Makowiec z Makaronem”) is a traditional Polish pudding, most common in the central and southern regions, which combines the gastronomic influences of Central Europe and the late Middle Ages, when poppy seeds became an essential ingredient in festive desserts. The dish usually consists of boiled wide noodles mixed with a sweet mixture of ground poppy seeds, milk, sugar, raisins, chopped nuts, and grated lemon zest. Rum or vanilla essence is added to the dessert to enhance the flavor, and it is traditionally associated with Christmas meals, especially Christmas Eve dinner. [33]

“Milchreis mit Fadennudeln” is a traditional dessert from Germany and Austria, combining rice with milk (“Milchreis”) and thin wheat flour noodles (“Fadennudeln”). The dessert is prepared by boiling the rice and noodles in milk sweetened with sugar, to which cinnamon, vanilla, and lemon zest are added for flavor. The result is a creamy and delicate dish, served both hot and cold, usually as a dessert or snack for children. [34]

CONCLUSIONS

Following the study, it can be concluded that pasta is a fundamental element in gastronomy, with a history and tradition that have shaped the way people cook and relate to food. It is not just a simple ingredient, but a medium through which culinary creativity and respect for raw materials are expressed.

Each pasta recipe tells a story about the ingredients used, local traditions, and the evolution of recipes over time. Pasta dishes can be enjoyed individually, but also as part of a broader culinary experience that brings together flavor, texture, and nutritional balance.

Pasta has the ability to adapt to the local context, to take on regional and international influences, and, at the same time, to preserve the authentic features of each cuisine. Thus, the study of pasta in gastronomy reveals not only its importance in nutrition, but also its cultural and identity role.

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