

# WHITE BOLOGNESE PASTA

Serves 4 to 6.

By Dennis W. Viau; modified from a restaurant trade journal.

Bolognese is a ragù, or chunky sauce. The sauce gets its “white” name from using heavy cream rather than a tomato sauce for the base. There is room for variation here, such as using different meats (see the ingredients for suggestions) and choosing whether or not to process the sauce to a smooth texture before serving. Even the pasta can be substituted. I think penne pasta would work well.



## Ingredients:

½ cup (70g) pancetta (or prosciutto), chopped

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 shallot, minced

1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves (discard stalks)

¾ cup (175ml) dry white wine

1 cup (200g) ground pork or turkey

1½ cups (350ml) heavy cream

½ tablespoon red pepper flakes (optional)

Pinch of salt, more to taste later

⅓ cup (80g) chicken livers, puréed

As needed, pappardelle pasta or other flat noodles such as fettucine or tagliatelle

## Directions:

In a medium-large skillet, sauté the pancetta on medium heat to render the fat, 3 to 4 minutes.

Add the garlic, shallot and thyme. Stirring occasionally, cook until the shallot is translucent and tender, 3 to 4 minutes.

Add the wine to deglaze the pan, scraping the bottom of the pan. Simmer to reduce the liquid volume by about half.

Add the ground meat, breaking it up with a spoon. Cook until all the meat changes color (it doesn't look raw).

Add the cream and stir. Add the (optional) red pepper flakes. Season with salt to taste, then reduce the heat to medium low. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add chicken liver puree and simmer for an additional 10 minutes. Check for moisture. If the sauce appears to be too dry or thick, it can be thinned with a little extra cream or milk.

For a smoother sauce, transfer the mixture to a blender and pulse to the desired texture. For a chunky texture, do not use the blender.

Adjust seasoning to taste. Plate cooked pasta (cooked according to package directions) and drape with sauce. Serve with your favorite vegetables or a side salad.

The **Step By Step** guide begins on the following page.

## STEP-BY-STEP

1



Pancetta, which is an Italian bacon without any hickory smoke flavor added (common in American bacon) is usually sold sliced. I found packaged diced pancetta, which saved me one step. If you have sliced pancetta, dice it and then sauté it in a large skillet to render the fat and slightly brown the meat.

2



Mince the shallot rather fine. The pieces can be larger than the ones I'm using here. Bolognese is a ragù, or chunky sauce; so the shallot doesn't need to be ultra-fine.

**3**

Add the shallots with the garlic and thyme to the skillet and sauté until the shallot is tender and translucent, 3 to 4 minutes.

**4**

Add the wine and bring to a boil. Simmer to reduce the liquid to about half the volume.

5



Add the chopped meat and cook until it no longer looks raw. It doesn't need to be browned, or even thoroughly cooked yet. It will complete cooking in a later step.

6



Add the cream and bring to a boil. You can add the optional red pepper flakes at this point. Simmer over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until the liquid begins to thicken, about 10 minutes.

7

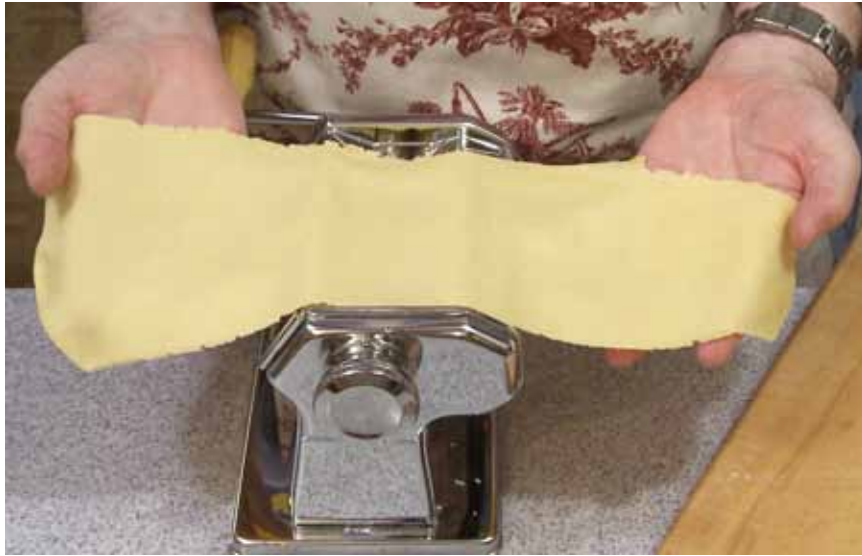


Add the puréed chicken livers and blend. Cook an additional 10 minutes. If the sauce appears to be getting too thick, it can be thinned with a little milk or additional cream.

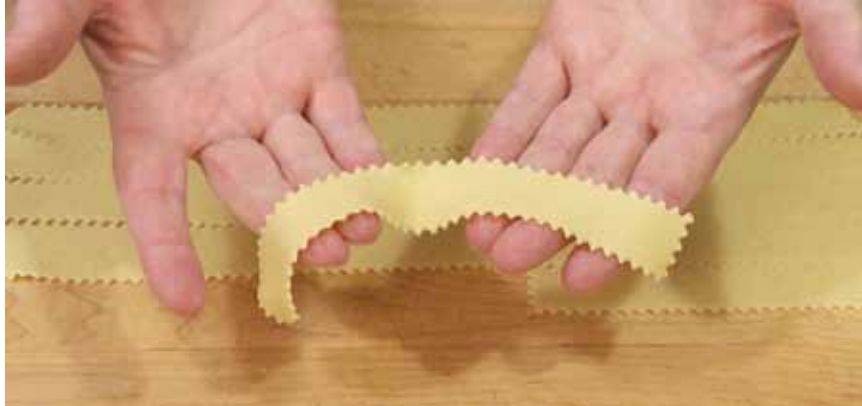
8



The finished sauce should be thick enough to coat pasta. Adjust for salt, then cover and set aside until the pasta is cooked.



I made my own pappardelle pasta from scratch for this dish. However, feel free to use fettucine or other pasta you desire. Cook it according to package directions.



Pappardelle is supposedly the second-largest flat noodle among Italian pasta, lasagna being the largest. According to my pasta encyclopedia, the size of pappardelle varies by region throughout Italy. In some regions of Italy pappardelle is even cut into squares rather than long noodles.



Cook and drain the pasta. Plate and drape with plenty of white Bolognese sauce, heating the sauce if necessary. For additional eye appeal, you could garnish this plate with chopped fresh parsley or basil.

## Conclusion

This dish is not difficult to make, especially if you purchase the pasta rather than make it yourself. The flavor is satisfying, with only a hint of the flavor of the chicken livers. If you prefer a smooth pasta sauce, you can blend this sauce briefly to a lighter texture in a food processor before serving. If the idea of chicken livers does not appeal to you, leave it out. I tasted the sauce before adding the livers and it was delicious.