



Spaghetti with Raw Tomato Sauce + Lemony Browned Butter

Serves 4

Fine sea salt
1 garlic clove
1 1/2 pounds tomatoes
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
One small handful fresh basil leaves
12 ounces long pasta, such as spaghetti or linguine
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into tablespoons
1/8 teaspoon sugar
Freshly ground black pepper

Boil the pasta water and prep the vegetables

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and salt the water well.

Smash the garlic clove and peel it.

Remove the core from the tomatoes and cut them into ½ inch pieces. (If you're using any cherry tomatoes, cut them in half.) Transfer them to a bowl and the olive oil and ½ teaspoon salt.

Tear half the basil leaves and add them to the tomatoes.

Cook the pasta

Add the pasta to the boiling water and cook until al dente, about 12 minutes or see the box for guidance. (Remember that the pasta will go into a cool sauce, so it will not continue cooking the way it would in a hot sauce.)

Meanwhile, brown the butter, then finish the dish

Have your lemon juice near the stove.

In a small pot, melt the butter over medium heat and add the garlic clove. Cook, swirling the pan occasionally. Watch as the butter foams up and the garlic starts to crackle. After 2 to 3 minutes, you'll see little speckles of milk solids that fall to the bottom of the golden fat and start to brown.

When the milk solids become the color of chestnuts, immediately swirl in the lemon juice and turn off the heat.

Remove the garlic clove and scrape the lemony browned butter over the tomatoes, being sure to get as many of the milk solids as possible.

Using tongs, transfer the pasta from the water to the tomatoes and toss. You should have plenty of liquid in the bowl, but if, for some reason, the pasta seems dry, add a little of the pasta water to the bowl to help loosen up the sauce. Taste and season with more salt, if necessary, and a few grinds of black pepper. If your tomatoes seem a little lackluster after tossing with the pasta, add the sugar, toss again, and taste. Add the rest of the basil, and serve.

The short version

- Boil the water for the pasta.

- Smash the garlic. Cut the tomatoes into ½-inch pieces and transfer to a large bowl. Add the olive oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and half the basil, torn.
- Brown the butter with the garlic clove in it. As soon as it's browned, add the lemon juice. Scrape over the tomatoes.
- Cook the pasta until al dente, then use tongs to transfer to the tomatoes. Toss, adding any pasta water, if necessary. Season with more salt, some pepper, and add the rest of the basil, and serve.

Fun for kids

- Tear the basil.
- Squeeze the lemon juice.
- Chop the tomatoes (if they're good with knives).
- Toss the pasta with the sauce.

Swaps

- Instead of spaghetti, use another pasta
- Use minced raw garlic, if that's your jam.
- Instead of basil, try mint or dill.

Bonus points

- Grate in some Parmesan cheese.
- Add some sliced green olives.
- Add a can or two of tuna if you want to up the protein quotient.
- Mash the tomatoes with a potato masher if you prefer a less chunky situation.