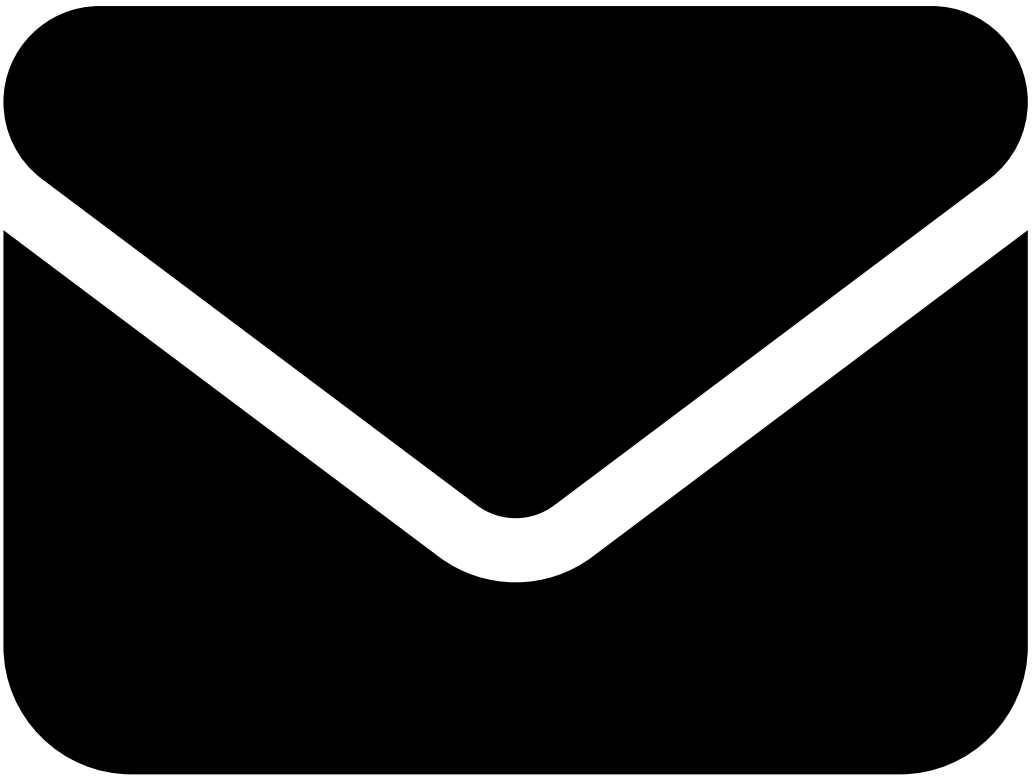
Authentic Spaghetti alla Puttanesca Recipe

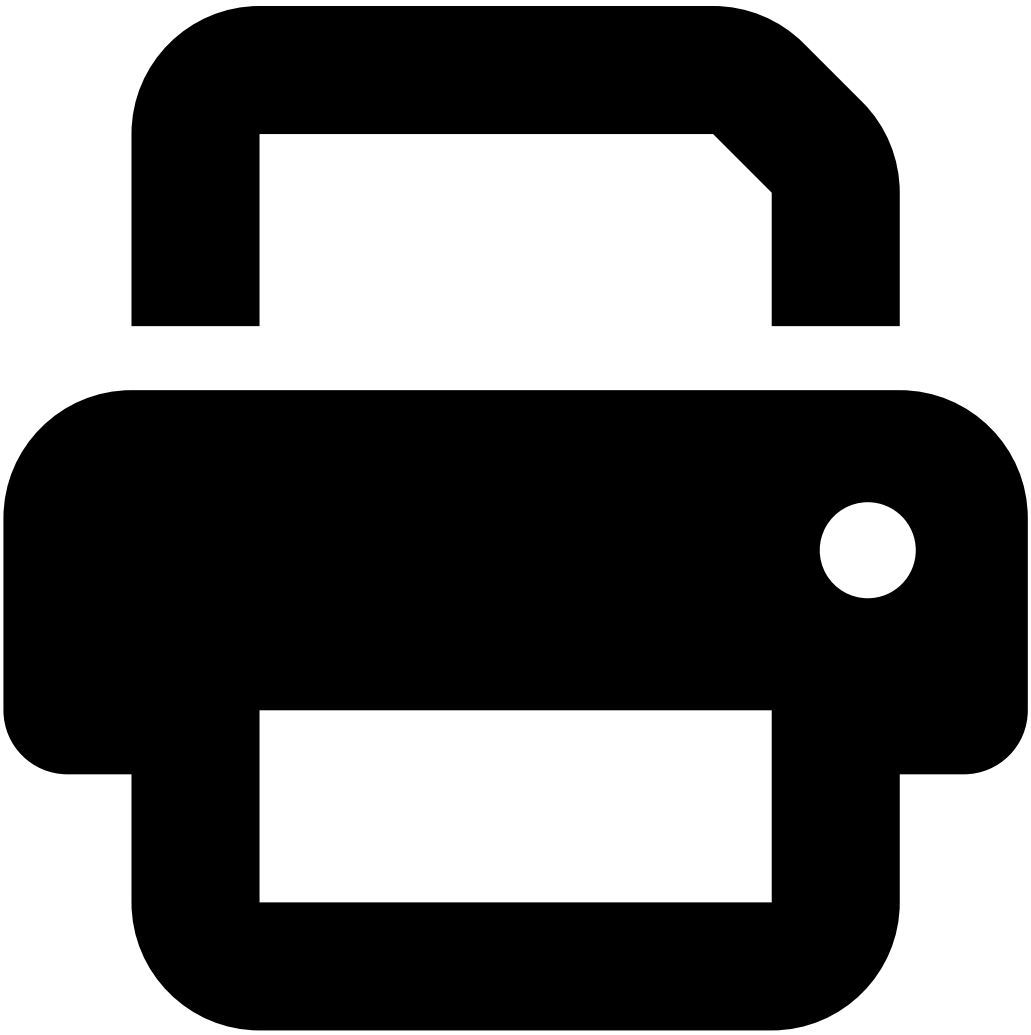
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Spaghetti alla Puttanesca Recipe is one of those bold, rustic pasta dishes that proves simple ingredients can create incredible flavor. Spaghetti alla Puttanesca is a traditional Italian recipe made with tomatoes, olives, capers, garlic, and anchovies, bringing together salty, briny, and rich Mediterranean flavors in every bite.

This pasta recipe comes together in about 30 minutes, making it perfect for busy weeknights when you want something comforting but full of character. It’s the kind of pantry pasta I grew up around in Italy—simple, unfussy, and always deeply satisfying. Once the sauce simmers and the pasta is tossed through, you get a dish that tastes like it took hours, not minutes.

Things to know about Authentic Spaghetti alla Puttanesca Recipe

- Don’t skip the anchovies. They melt into the sauce and add incredible depth without making the pasta taste fishy.
- Cook the pasta just until al dente so it finishes perfectly in the sauce.
- Save some pasta water to help the sauce cling to every strand of spaghetti.
- Use good-quality olives and capers for the best flavor.

Storage

Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Reheat gently in a skillet with a splash of water.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does Puttanesca traditionally contain anchovies?

Yes. Traditional Spaghetti alla Puttanesca includes anchovies, which dissolve into the sauce and provide a savory, umami-rich flavor.

Can I make it vegetarian?

Absolutely. Simply omit the anchovies. The olives and capers will still provide plenty of bold flavor.

What pasta is best for Puttanesca?

Spaghetti is the classic choice, but linguine and bucatini work beautifully as well.

Final Thoughts

Spaghetti alla Puttanesca is proof that some of the best Italian recipes come from humble ingredients. It’s quick, affordable, and packed with the bold Mediterranean

If you enjoy simple Italian recipes made with everyday ingredients, here are a few more favorites from my kitchen. From classic pasta dishes to fresh salads and appetizers, these recipes pair beautifully with Spaghetti alla Puttanesca and bring a taste of Italy to your table.

- **Classic Bruschetta** – “Serve this pasta alongside my Classic Bruschetta for an easy Italian-inspired dinner.”
- **Italian Roasted Pepper Salad** – “Pair Puttanesca with a fresh Italian Roasted Pepper Salad for a complete Mediterranean meal.”
- **Italian Tomato Salad with Heirloom Tomatoes** – “A simple tomato salad makes the perfect light side dish.”
- **Spaghetti alla Nerano** – “If you love classic Italian pasta recipes, be sure to try my Spaghetti alla Nerano.”
- **Spaghetti Carbonara** – “Another Roman favorite you’ll love is my authentic Spaghetti Carbonara.”
- **Orecchiette with Italian Sausage and Cherry Tomatoes** – “Looking for another quick pasta dinner? Try this flavorful orecchiette recipe.”

Love easy Italian pasta recipes? Be sure to save this Spaghetti alla Puttanesca recipe and browse the pasta section of the blog for more authentic Italian favorites inspired by my childhood in Tuscany and 40 years in the restaurant business. From comforting classics to seasonal dishes, you’ll find plenty of restaurant-quality recipes made simple for home cooks.

Authentic Spaghetti alla Puttanesca Recipe



Spaghetti alla Puttanesca is a classic Southern Italian pasta dish made with simple pantry staples like tomatoes, olives, capers, garlic, and anchovies. Ready in about 30 minutes, this bold and flavorful pasta is perfect for busy weeknights when you want a satisfying homemade meal without spending hours in the kitchen. Every bite delivers the savory, briny flavors that make Italian cooking so memorable.

- 12 oz. spaghetti
- 3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- 4 fillets anchovy chopped
- 1 each Calabrian chili adjust to taste (can substitute red chili flakes)
- 1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 1 cup Kalamata olives, sliced
- 1/3 cup capers (drained)
- 1/3 cup chopped Italian parsley
- salt and pepper to taste

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the spaghetti according to package directions until al dente.
2. While the pasta cooks, heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat.

3. Add the garlic, anchovies, and red pepper flakes. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, stirring frequently, until fragrant and the anchovies have melted into the oil.
4. Stir in the crushed tomatoes, olives, and capers. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook for about 15 minutes.
5. Reserve 1 cup of pasta water before draining the spaghetti.
6. Add the drained pasta to the sauce. Toss well, adding a splash of pasta water if needed to loosen the sauce.
7. Stir in the parsley and season with black pepper. Taste and add salt only if needed, as the olives and capers already provide plenty of seasoning

Spaghetti alla Puttanesca Recipe Spaghetti alla Puttanesca classic Italian pasta recipe