

# Thin No-Knead Focaccia Rolls (Light & Crispy)

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After years of making focaccia in restaurant kitchens, I got used to the classic version—rich with olive oil, thick, and deeply golden. But at home, I started leaning toward something simpler.

These thin focaccia rolls are exactly that.

No kneading, no heavy oil, just flour, water, yeast, a touch of honey, and a technique that does all the work for you. The stretch-and-fold method builds structure without effort, creating a dough that bakes up light, slightly crisp, and incredibly versatile.

They're thinner than traditional focaccia, a little more understated, and perfect when you want the flavor of fresh bread without the richness of a heavily oiled dough.

# Things to know about this Thin No-Knead Focaccia Rolls (Light & Crispy)

## What Makes These Different

- No kneading required
- Made with a **stretch-and-fold method**
- Minimal olive oil (just a light drizzle before baking)
- Thinner, lighter texture
- Clean, simple ingredient list

## Tips for Success)

- **This is a yeast dough**—give it time to rise fully
- **No kneading needed**—the folds do the work
- **Keep hands slightly damp** to handle the dough easily
- **Press them thin on purpose**—they will puff slightly as they bake
- **Minimal oil is intentional**—this keeps them light, not rich
- **Serving Ideas**
  - Perfect for light sandwiches
  - Serve warm with soup or salad
  - Tear and dip in olive oil or sauces
  - Use as an everyday bread alternative

## Storage

- Room temp: up to 2 days
- Reheat: 350°F for 5–7 minutes
- Freeze: up to 2 months
- If you're craving a thicker, more traditional version, check out my **Classic Focaccia Bread**—it's soft, airy, and more olive oil-forward.

You can also pair these rolls with:

- Authentic Bolognese Sauce
- Italian Meatballs
- Roasted Pepper Salad

Save this recipe, share it, and let me know how you use your focaccia rolls—I especially love seeing how you turn them into sandwiches.

## **Thin No-Knead Focaccia Rolls (Light, & Crispy )**



These thin focaccia rolls are made with a simple yeast dough and a no-knead stretch-and-fold method. Light, crisp, and not oil-heavy—perfect for sandwiches or serving.

- 4 cups all purpose flour
- 2 cups warm water
- 2 1/4 tsp active dry yeast (1 packet)
- 2 tsp. honey
- 2 tsp. salt
- olive oil for drizzling before baking
- Optional: flaky salt or herbs

## 1. **Activate the yeast**

In a bowl, combine warm water, honey, and yeast. Let sit 5–10 minutes until foamy

## 2. **Mix the dough**

Add flour and salt. Mix until a shaggy, sticky dough forms. Cover with a **damp towel** and let rest 10 minutes.

## 3. **Stretch and fold (3 rounds)**

Instead of kneading, you'll build structure gently:

Cover and rest **10 minutes**

Repeat this process **3 times total**

Wet your hands slightly Pull one side of the dough up and fold it over itself Rotate the bowl and repeat 3–4 times

## 4. **First rise**

After the final fold, cover and let rise 1–1.5 hours, until doubled.

## 5. **Shape into thin rolls**

Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface .Divide into 8–10 portions and gently shape. Place onto a sheet pan and press each one down so they're **thin and slightly flattened** (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick).

## 6. **Second rest**

Cover loosely with the damp towel and let rest **20–30 minutes**.

## 7. **Finish & bake**

Lightly dimple the surface with your fingertips .Drizzle **just a small amount of olive oil** over each roll.

Bake at **400°F** for 25 – 30 minutes, until lightly golden.

180

Main Course

Italian

focaccia, bread, rolls

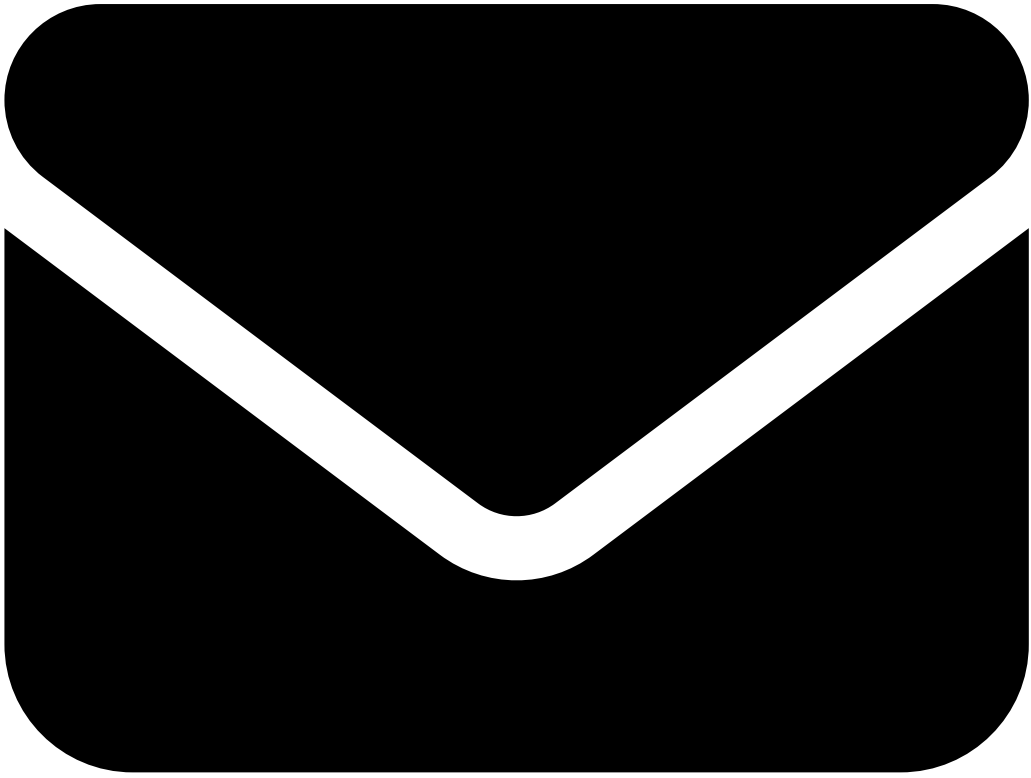
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**Authentic Italian Stuffed  
Tomatoes with Rice and  
Potatoes (Roman Recipe)**

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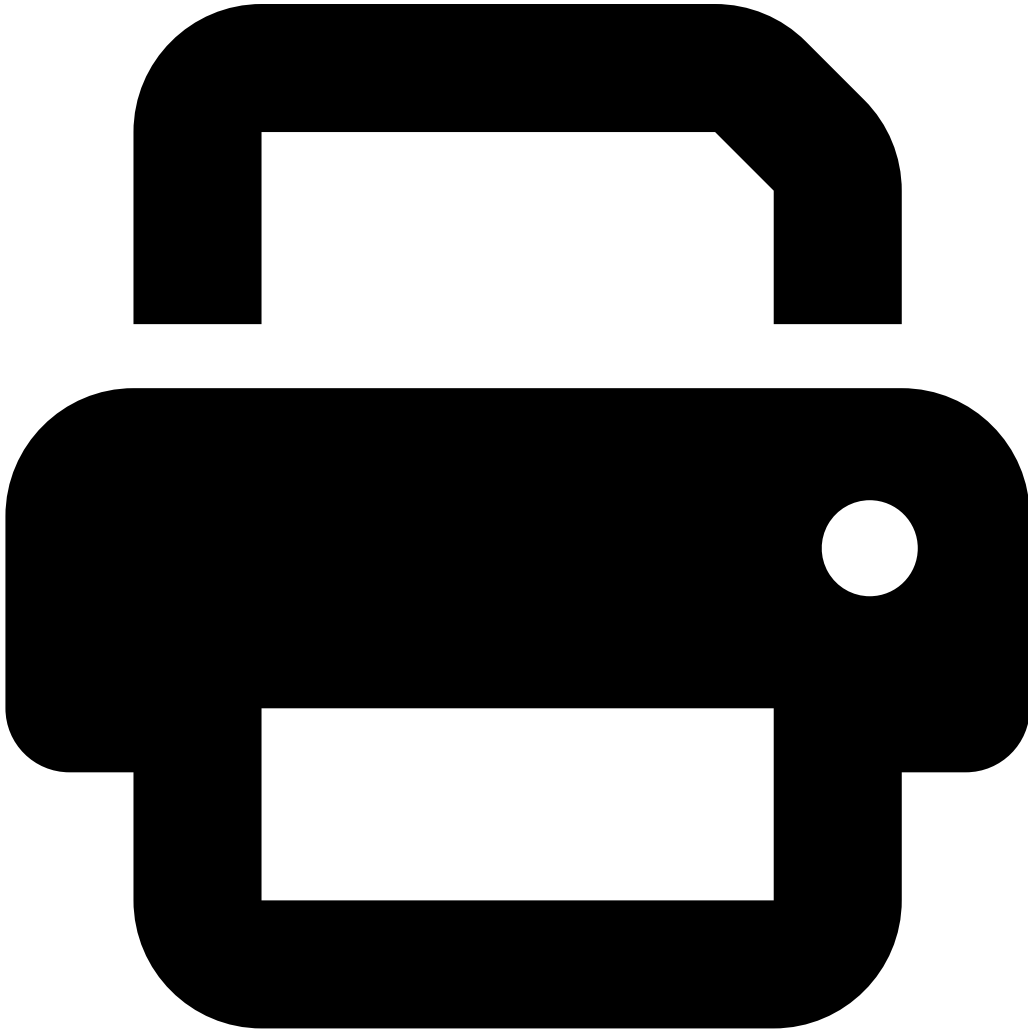
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This dish goes back to **Roman home cooking**, where simplicity wasn't a trend—it was survival and tradition. *Pomodori Ripieni di Riso* (stuffed tomatoes with rice) became especially popular in and around Rome and Lazio as a way to stretch seasonal summer produce into a full, satisfying meal.

Farmers and home cooks would hollow out ripe tomatoes at peak season, using every bit of the fruit—juice, pulp, and all—to season uncooked rice. As it baked slowly in the oven, the rice absorbed the tomato's natural sweetness while olive oil, garlic, and basil built layers of flavor. Nothing was wasted, and nothing was complicated.

The addition of potatoes baked underneath is a classic Roman touch. They act almost like a built-in side dish, soaking up the tomato juices as everything roasts together into one unified pan.

What you get is a dish that feels humble but deeply intentional—rooted in old-world Italian cooking where seasonal ingredients and patience did all the work.

## Things to know about this Authentic Italian Stuffed Tomatoes with Rice and Potatoes (Roman Recipe)

### What to Look For

- Rice fully cooked and fluffy inside
- Tomatoes slightly wrinkled and jammy
- Potatoes deeply golden and infused with tomato juices

### • How to Serve

- Best at **room temperature** (this is very Italian)
- Drizzle with a little fresh olive oil before serving
- Spoon those potatoes right alongside—don't leave them behind

### • Pro Tips

- Don't skip the resting time for the rice
- Use ripe but sturdy tomatoes so they hold their shape
- If the pan looks dry halfway through, add a splash of water or more olive oil
- Let them sit 10–15 minutes before serving so everything settles

### • Storage

- **Fridge: up to 3 days**
- **Reheat gently or enjoy cold/room temp**
- **Flavor actually gets better the next day**
- **If you loved these authentic Roman stuffed tomatoes, you'll want to explore more simple Italian dishes that let seasonal ingredients shine.**
  - **My Authentic Tomato Bolognese Sauce** for another classic, slow-simmered staple
  - **Italian Roasted Potatoes** for the perfect crispy side dish
  - **Caponata (Sicilian Eggplant Relish)** if you love bold Mediterranean flavors
  - **Lemon Loaf** cake for something bright and sweet to finish

If you make this recipe, leave a comment and let me know how it turned out—or tag me so I can see your version straight from the oven ☐

## **Authentic Italian Stuffed Tomatoes with Rice and Potatoes (Roman Recipe)**



Authentic Italian stuffed tomatoes filled with rice, garlic, and basil, roasted with potatoes until tender and flavorful—just like in Rome.

- 6 medium tomatoes (firm)
- 1 cup uncooked short grain rice (Arborio )
- 2 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1/3 cup basil (torn)
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 2-3 medium potatoes (cut into medium dice)
- salt and pepper to taste

## 1. **Prep the Tomatoes**

Cut the tops off and set aside. Scoop out the pulp and juices into a bowl. Salt the inside of each tomato and place them upside down for about 20 minutes to drain.

## 2. **Make the Rice Filling**

Crush or blend the tomato pulp until slightly smooth. Add:

Mix and let it sit for **at least 15 minutes**. □ This step is key—the rice absorbs all that tomato flavor before baking

## 3. **Prep the Potatoes**

Slice the potatoes thin or into medium dice Toss with:

Spread them in the bottom of your baking dish.

## 4. **Stuff & Assemble**

Fill the tomatoes with the rice mixture (don't pack tightly). Place them directly on top of the potatoes .Add

the tomato tops back on and drizzle everything with a little more olive oil.

## 5. Roast

Bake at **375°F (190°C)** for **50–60 minutes**, until:

the rice is tender the tomatoes are soft and slightly caramelized the potatoes are golden and crispy on the edges

Main Course

Italian

authentic Italian stuffed tomatoes with rice and potatoes”

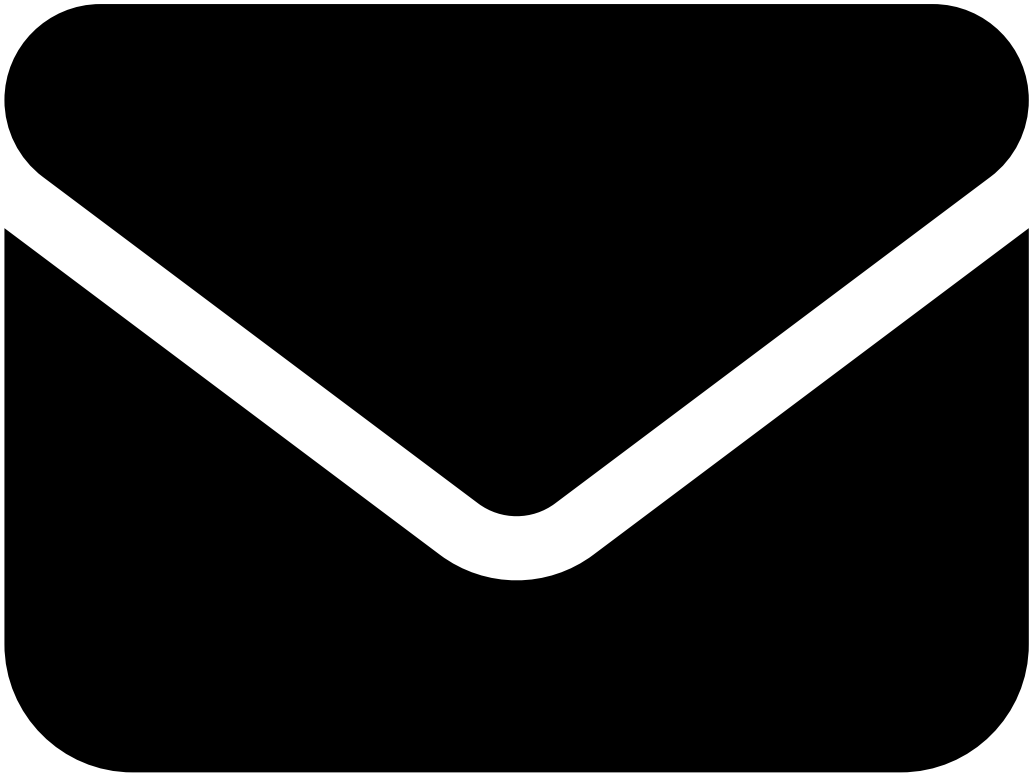
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# 15 Weeknight Italian Meals: Easy Recipes in Under 45 Minutes

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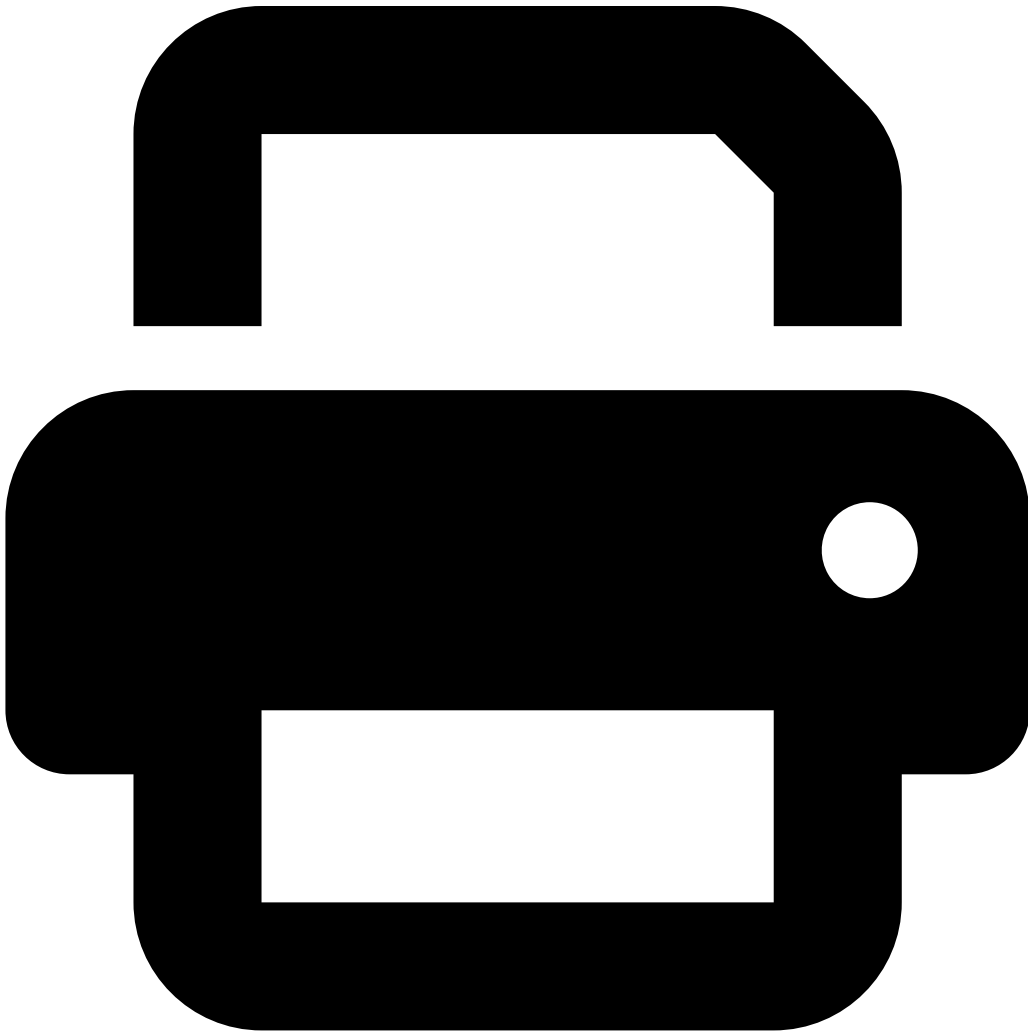
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Weeknight cooking doesn't need to be complicated to be good. Some of the best Italian meals are built on simple ingredients, cooked well, and brought to the table without overthinking it.

This is the kind of food you make when you want something real—pasta that comes together in one pan, sauces that don't take all day, and meals that feel comforting without being heavy. It's not about perfection, it's about flavor, timing, and knowing a few go-to recipes you can rely on.

Inside this 15 weeknight Italian meals guide, you'll find a collection of easy weeknight Italian meals—from quick pastas and skillet dinners to cozy baked dishes and fresh, seasonal sides. Everything here is designed to work in real life, with recipes you can make in under 45 minutes and come back to again and again.

# Lemon Asparagus Ricciarelle Pasta

Light, fresh, and full of spring flavors! This **Lemon Asparagus Pasta** features tender sautéed asparagus, bright lemon sauce, and Parmesan, perfect for an easy weeknight dinner or elegant spring meal.

[GO TO RECIPE](#)

# One-Pot Creamy Zucchini Pasta (Pasta e Zucchini)

This one-pot creamy zucchini pasta is a traditional Italian recipe where pasta cooks directly with zucchini, onion, and olive oil, creating a naturally creamy sauce with Parmesan and pasta starch.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

# Spicy pasta Norcina Spicy Italian sausage pasta

Spicy pasta alla norcina is an Italian pasta dish made with sausage in a creamy cheese sauce. There are different variations, some have mushrooms or different cured meats. The recipe is easy to make and takes about as much time to make as it takes the pasta to cook[GO TO RECIPE](#)

# Pesto tortellini pasta salad

If you're looking for the perfect summer pasta salad, this pesto tortellini pasta **Salad** is one of my favorites. Full of Mediterranean flavors and hearty enough to be a meal on its

own, it's one of those dishes that always disappears quickly when ever I bring it to potlucks, or Sunday lunches.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

## **Authentic Italian Pasta e Fagioli**

Authentic Pasta e fagioli is a humble, hearty and soul-warming Italian pasta dish that brings back vivid childhood memories of the smell of simmering beans, tomatoes, and garlic. for many Italian families, pasta e fagioli was the meal that could feed everyone on a tight budget. It's the ultimate "cucina povera" dish- poor kitchen.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

## **Air Fryer Parmesan chicken Spiedini**

Air fryer parmesan chicken spiedini are Italy's version of skewers or kabobs. In this spiedini recipe boneless, skinless chicken thighs are marinated in a blend of Italian spices, cooked in the air fryer, and basted with a delicious garlic, parmesan butter sauce.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

## **Chicken Meatballs with marry me orzo**

Tender chicken meatballs are always a hit at the dinner table, and when you pair them with creamy *Marry Me Orzo*, you've got the ultimate comfort meal. This dish brings together juicy baked chicken meatballs and orzo pasta simmered in a rich Parmesan and sun-dried tomato cream sauce. It's the kind of meal that feels special enough for date night yet easy enough for a weeknight family dinner.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

## **Pollo al Limone Italian lemon**

# chicken

Lemons are in peak season right now, and there's no better way to celebrate their bright, zesty flavor than with this Italian Lemon Chicken. Known as *Pollo al Limone*, this dish is simple, rustic, and full of Southern Italian charm. With a golden sear, a light pan sauce, and a fresh lemon-parsley drizzle, it's the kind of meal that tastes like summer. GO TO RECIPE

## Best cod Francese Recipe- in 30 minutes

**Best Cod Francese Recipe – in 30 Minutes** is a lightly battered, pan-fried cod fillet in an elegant lemon, butter and white wine sauce. It's similar to chicken piccata—but without the capers and with a velvety, lemon-butter sauce that clings to the golden crust. Cod Francese is a classic restaurant-style dish that's surprisingly simple to make at home. The hallmark is the light coating of flour and egg that gives the fish a delicate, crisp texture—perfect for soaking up that tangy, buttery sauce. GO TO RECIPE

## Shrimp spaghetti with basil tomato sauce

This Shrimp Spaghetti with Tomato Basil Sauce is a simple, fresh pasta dish made with sautéed shrimp, juicy summer tomatoes, garlic, and plenty of fragrant basil. The sauce is created right in the pan by combining the tomato juices with starchy pasta water and a generous handful of grated parmesan, giving you a light flavorful coating that clings to the pasta. GO TO RECIPE

<https://lorianasheacooks.com/shrimp-tomato-basil-spaghetti/>

# Authentic Italian shrimp oreganata

Crispy, garlicky, and straight out of an Italian kitchen.

This shrimp oreganata is all about simple ingredients—olive oil, lemon, breadcrumbs, and a heavy hand with oregano—baked until golden and perfect for scooping with bread.

It's fast, it's bold, and it tastes like something you'd order at your favorite spot... but better at home.

[GO TO RECIPE](#)

# Crispy pan fried chicken cutlets

These crispy breaded chicken cutlet recipe are pan fried and they were a staple in my childhood growing up and in many Italian kitchens. They are juicy, crispy delicious and so easy to make. Serve the cutlets along side a salad for a light lunch or dinner.[GO TO RECIPE](#)

# The Best Italian-Style Fried Calamari

Golden, crispy, and impossible to stop eating.

This Italian-style fried calamari is light, crunchy, and finished with lemon and a pinch of salt—just the way it should be. No heavy batter, no fuss—just fresh squid, a quick fry, and that perfect crisp.

Serve it hot with marinara or straight up with lemon... either way, it's gone in minutes.

GO TO RECIPE

## Braised Fennel Oreganata with Pancetta

Braised fennel oreganata with pancetta is one of those simple Italian side dishes that feels both rustic and elegant – the kind of recipe that tastes like it came out of a cozy countryside kitchen. Fennel is one of my favorite seasonal ingredients to cook with this time of year. When it's in season, it's sweet, aromatic, and incredibly versatile, and I love finding ways to let its natural flavor shine.

GO TO RECIPE

## One pan orzo with summer vegetables

**Some meals just feel easy**—especially when they come together in one pan. This one-pan orzo with summer vegetables is one of those simple, feel-good recipes that checks all the boxes: quick to make, minimal cleanup, and full of fresh summer flavor.  
GO TO RECIPE

At the end of the day, weeknight cooking should feel manageable—not like a project. These are the kinds of Italian meals you can lean on when you want something good without spending hours in the kitchen. Simple ingredients, a few solid techniques, and recipes that actually work on a busy night.

Whether it's a quick pasta, a one-pan skillet, or something baked and cozy, this is the kind of cooking that becomes part of your routine—the meals you make without thinking twice, and the ones everyone looks forward to.

Save this guide so you always have a go-to list of easy weeknight Italian meals.

Pick a recipe to try this week, and come back when you need something new. For more simple, flavorful Italian recipes, explore the blog and find your next favorite.

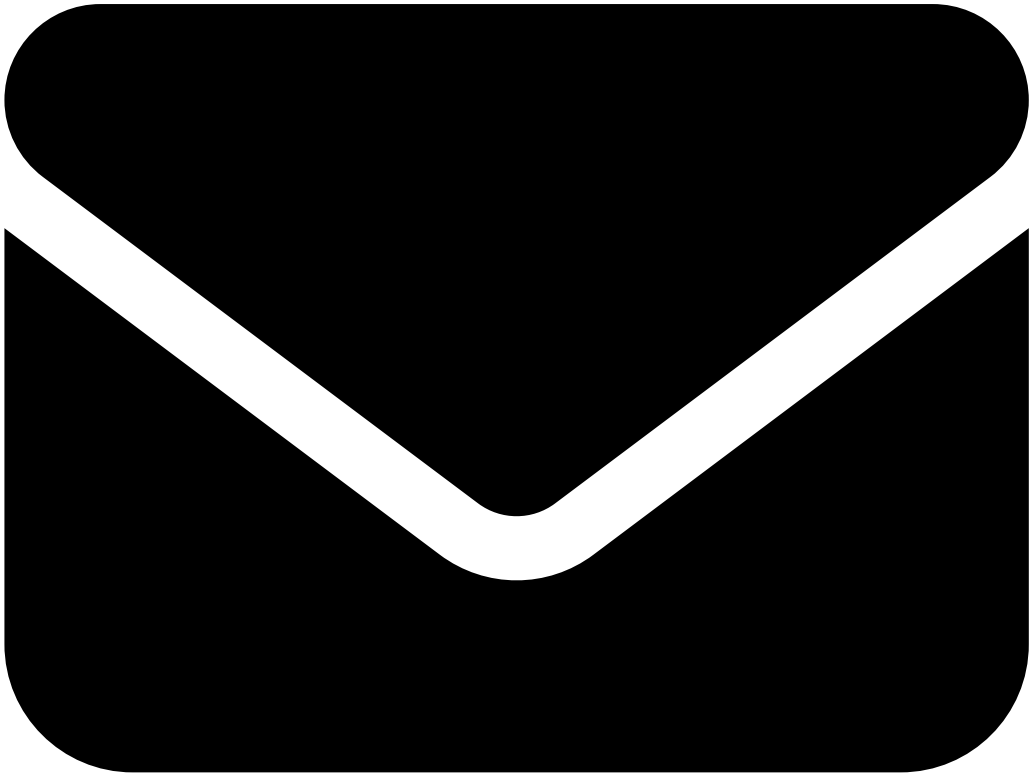
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## **Eggs Benedict Recipe with Blender Hollandaise | Easy Restaurant Style**

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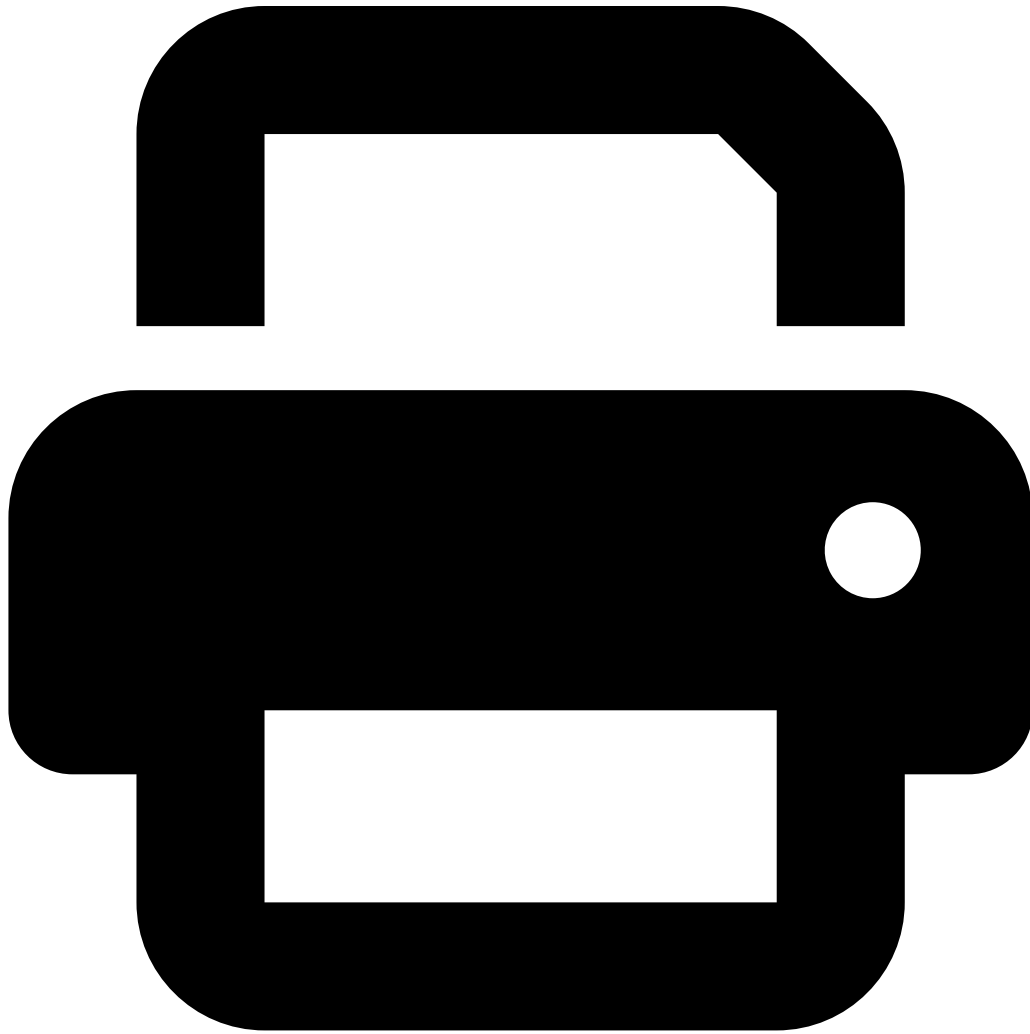
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This is our classic diner-style Eggs Benedict—simple, rich, and made the way we actually serve it in our kitchen.

Perfectly toasted English muffins, thick-cut Canadian bacon, soft poached eggs, and a silky blender hollandaise that comes together in minutes. This is the kind of brunch that feels like restaurant food, but you can easily make at home.

If you've ever been intimidated by hollandaise sauce, this version changes everything.

## **What is Eggs Benedict?**

Eggs Benedict is a classic brunch dish made with:

- toasted English muffin
- Canadian bacon (or ham)
- poached eggs

- hollandaise sauce

It's all about balance: crispy, creamy, rich, and bright from lemony hollandaise.

# Things to know about this Eggs Benedict Recipe with Blender Hollandaise | Easy Restaurant Style

## How to Assemble Eggs Benedict

1. Toast English muffins until golden.
2. Warm or lightly crisp Canadian bacon.
3. Poach eggs until whites are set but yolks are soft.
4. Layer: muffin → bacon → poached egg.
5. Spoon over warm hollandaise sauce.
6. Serve immediately.

## Pro Tips (this is what makes it rank + feel premium)

- Butter must be **hot** for proper emulsification
- Add butter slowly to prevent splitting
- Use fresh eggs for best poaching results
- Hollandaise is best served immediately

### • ☐☐ Why This Version Works

This is the same hollandaise we use in our diner kitchen—fast, consistent, and rich every time. The blender method removes the guesswork but keeps all the classic flavor.

- If you loved this Eggs Benedict, don't stop at brunch ☐

Try our **Italian Breakfast Cookies (Biscotti da Colazione)** for something lightly sweet to pair with your coffee, or treat yourself to our Ciambelle **Italian unfilled Donuts** for a true bakery-style morning.

## Eggs Benedict Recipe with Blender Hollandaise | Easy Restaurant Style



Easy Eggs Benedict recipe made diner-style with quick blender hollandaise sauce. Rich, creamy, and perfect for brunch at home.

- 2 English muffins (split and toasted)
- 4 slices Canadian bacon or ham (for the eggs benedict)
- 4 large eggs (for the eggs benedict)
- water for poaching (for the eggs benedict)
- 1 Tbsp vinegar or lemon juice (for the eggs benedict)
- 1 Stick butter (For the Blender Hollandaise:)
- 3 egg yolks (For the Blender Hollandaise:)
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice (For the Blender Hollandaise:)
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard (For the Blender Hollandaise:)
- Pinch of salt (For the Blender Hollandaise:)
- Optional: pinch of cayenne pepper (for serving)

1. Start by making the hollandaise so it's ready to go.

Melt the butter until fully liquid and hot. In a blender, combine egg yolks, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, and salt. Blend for about 10–15 seconds until the mixture becomes slightly thick and pale. With the blender running on low, slowly drizzle in the hot melted butter in a thin stream until the sauce becomes thick, smooth, and creamy. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Keep warm

2. For the poached eggs, bring a pot of water to a gentle simmer (not boiling). Add vinegar if using. Crack each egg into a small bowl first. Stir the water to create a gentle whirlpool, then carefully slide the egg into the center. Cook for about 3–4 minutes until the whites are set but the yolk remains soft. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain.
3. While the eggs are poaching, warm the Canadian bacon in a pan until lightly browned and heat the English muffins until golden and crisp.
4. To assemble, place the warm bacon on each toasted and buttered muffin half, top with a poached egg, and spoon generously with warm blender hollandaise sauce. Serve immediately.

## □ Chef Notes

- Butter must be **hot** to properly emulsify the hollandaise
- Fresh eggs give the best poached shape and texture
- Hollandaise is best served immediately—do not reheat
- Vinegar helps stabilize poached eggs but is optional

Breakfast

Italian

Hollandaise, eggs, benedict, breakfast, brunch

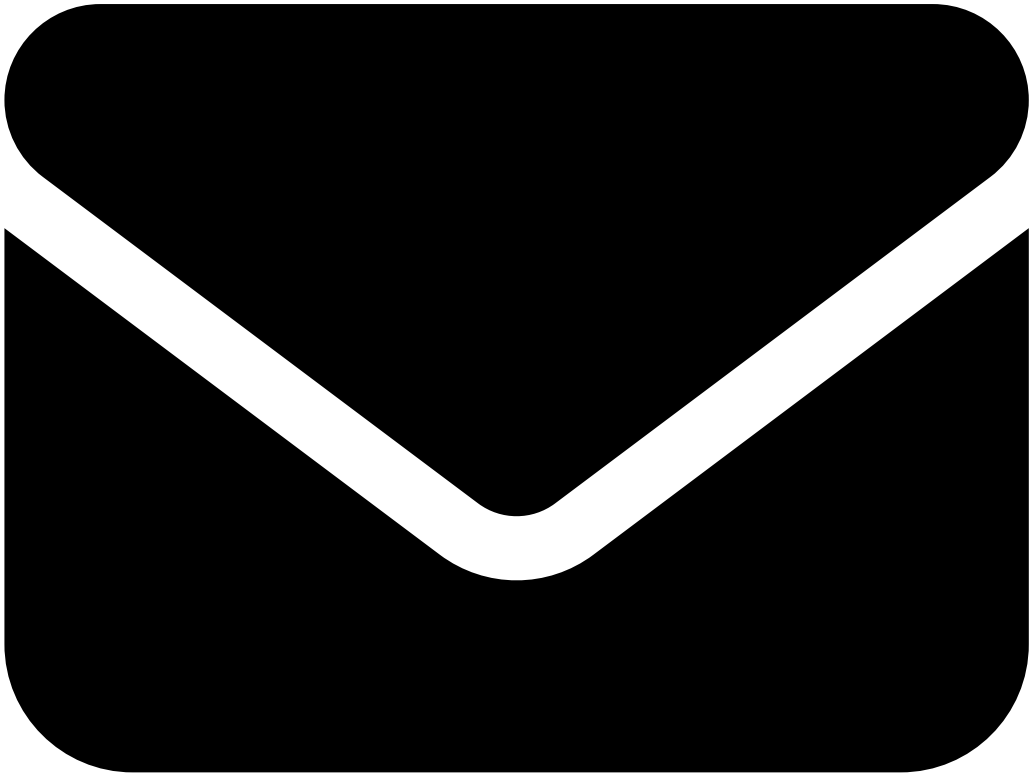
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# Italian Braised Pork Ribs

## Italian Braised Pork Ribs

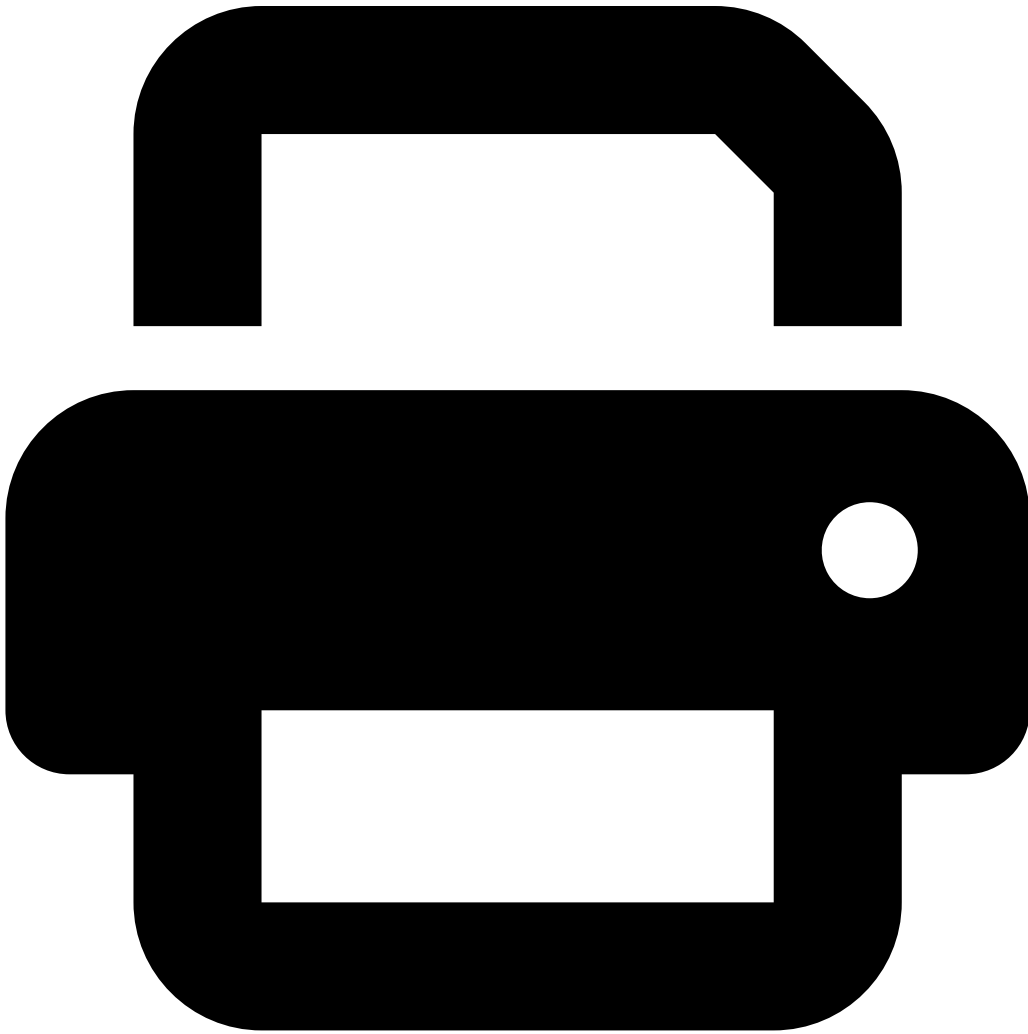
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These braised pork ribs are a true comfort dish—rich, rustic, and deeply flavorful. Instead of grilling or roasting, the ribs are slowly cooked in a classic Italian soffrito of onion, carrot, and celery, then deglazed with white wine and simmered with a touch of tomato sauce. The result is incredibly tender meat that melts off the bone and a savory sauce perfect for spooning over pasta, polenta, or crusty bread.

Braised meats have long been a cornerstone of Italian home cooking, especially in regions where tougher, more economical cuts were transformed into rich, comforting meals through slow cooking. This technique—known as *brasato*—relies on time, gentle heat, and simple ingredients to build deep flavor.

# Things to know about this Italian Braised Pork Rib recipe

Fall-apart tender ribs every time

- Built on simple, classic Italian flavors
- Perfect for Sunday dinner or special occasions
- Make-ahead friendly—the flavor gets even better

## Storage

Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Reheat gently on the stovetop or in the oven.

**Freezer-friendly:** Freeze for up to 2 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before reheating.

## What to Serve With

- Creamy polenta
- Pasta
- Crusty Italian bread
- Roasted vegetables

## Tips for Success

- Don't rush the browning—it builds deep flavor
- Keep the heat low during braising for the most tender results
- Make it a day ahead for even richer flavor

Loved this recipe? Explore more cozy Italian comfort food dishes here:

- ☐ Anelletti al forno Authentic Sicilian baked pasta recipe
- ☐ Lemon asparagus pasta recipe a Spring time favorite
- ☐ One pot creamy zucchini pasta a perfect weeknight meal ready in less than 30 minutes

Or head back to the blog at [lorianasheacooks.com](http://lorianasheacooks.com) for more

rustic, home-cooked Italian meals ☐

## Italian Braised Pork Ribs



Tender pork ribs braised low and slow in a classic Italian soffrito, deglazed with white wine and simmered in tomato sauce until fall-apart delicious.

- 3 lbs. pork ribs
- 4 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 cup onion (chopped)
- 1/2 cup carrot (chopped)
- 1/2 cup celery (chopped)
- 1 Tbsp. garlic (minced)
- 3/4 cup white wine
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- salt and pepper to taste

1. **Sear the ribs** Season the pork ribs with salt and pepper. Heat olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat and sear the ribs on all sides until browned. Remove and set aside.

2. **Build the soffrito** In the same pot, add onion, carrot, and celery. Cook until softened and fragrant, about 5–7 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook for another minute.
3. **Deglaze** Pour in the white wine, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pot. Let it simmer for 2–3 minutes to reduce slightly.
4. **Braise** Return the ribs to the pot and add the tomato sauce. Cover and reduce heat to low. Let simmer gently for 1½ to 2 hours, or until the ribs are tender and nearly falling off the bone.
5. **Finish and serve** Sprinkle with fresh parsley before serving. Spoon the sauce over the ribs and serve hot.

Main Course

Italian

Italian, braised, porkribs, ribs

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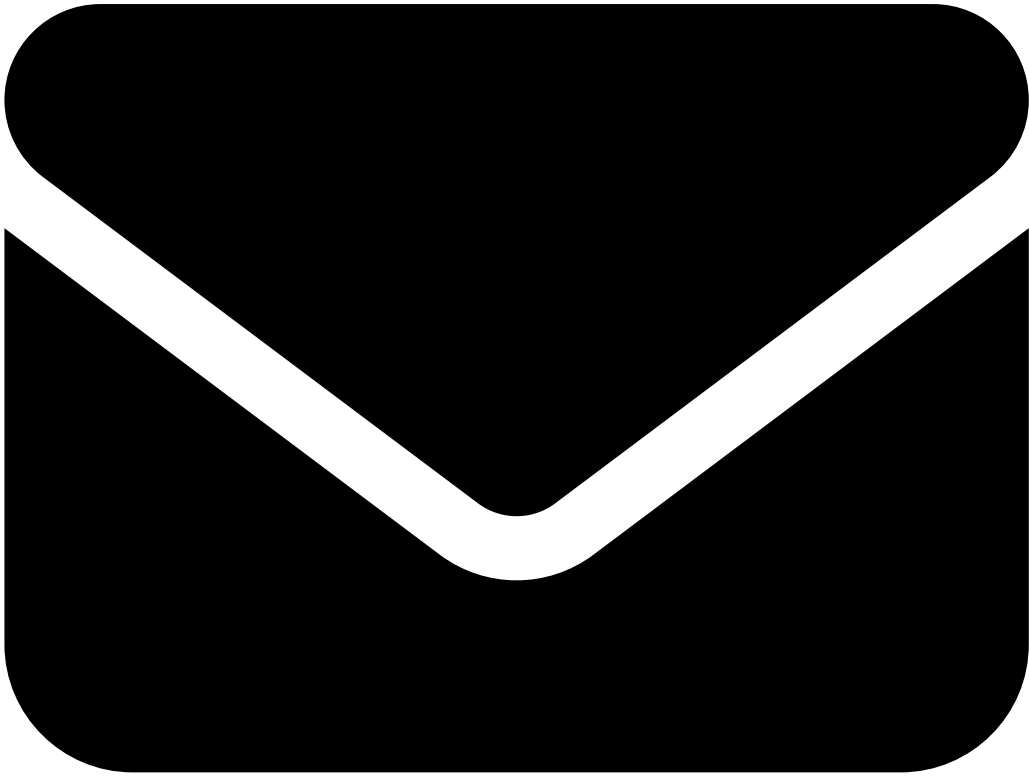
## **Italian Spring Stew with Artichokes, Fava Beans & Peas (Vignarola Recipe)**

## **Italian Spring Stew with Artichokes, Fava Beans & Peas**

# (Vignaroła Recipe)

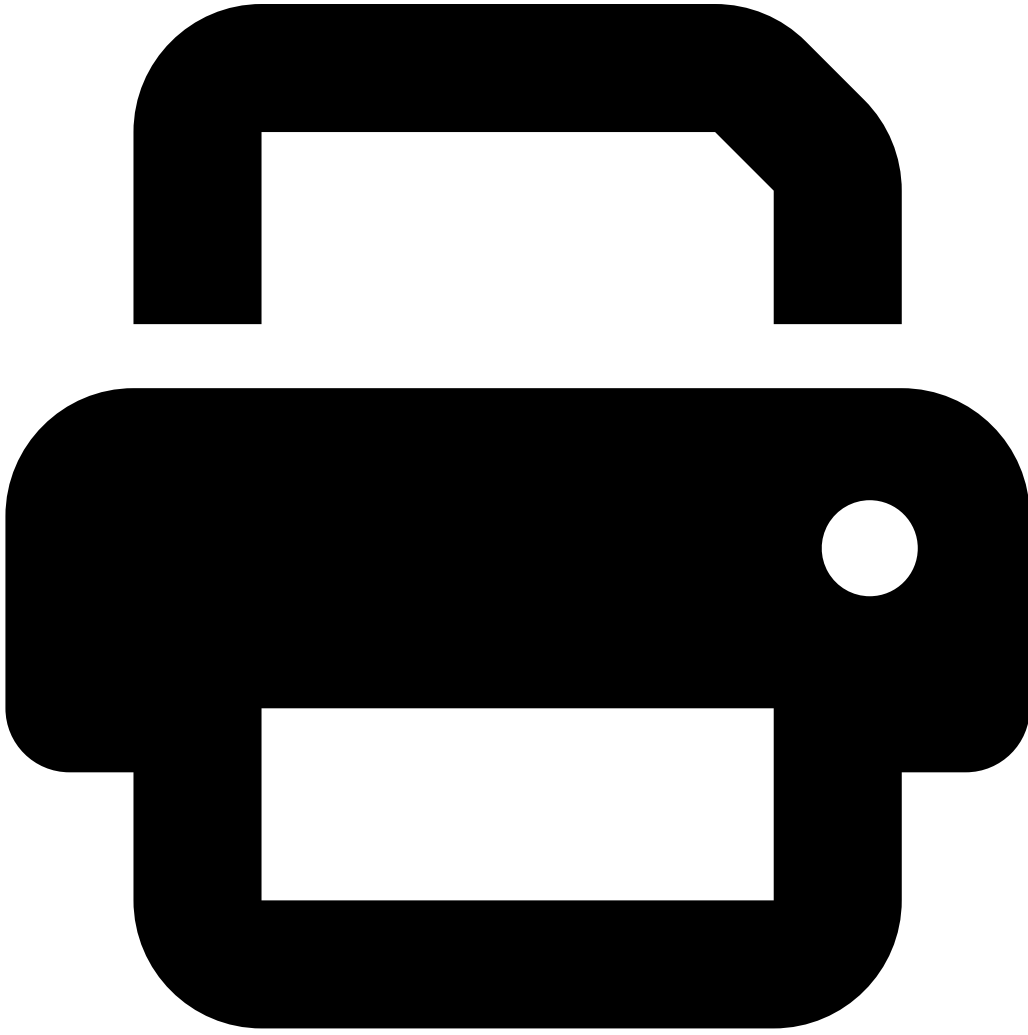
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If you've ever wondered what to do with fresh fava beans, this Italian spring stew is the answer.

This dish, known as *vignarola*, comes from Rome and celebrates everything we love about spring cooking—simple ingredients, minimal fuss, and incredible flavor. Artichokes, sweet peas, and tender fava beans are gently simmered together until soft and silky, creating a light, brothy stew that feels both rustic and refined.

This vegetarian version keeps it fresh and vibrant while still full of classic Roman flavor.

## Things to know about Italian Spring

# Stew with Artichokes, Fava Beans & Peas (Vignarola Recipe)

- Fully vegetarian and naturally light.
- Should be slightly brothy, not thick.
- Fresh fava beans taste best, but frozen works in a pinch.
- Artichokes take the longest—cook them first.

## • Variations

### **Pasta Version**

Toss the finished vignarola with short pasta and a splash of pasta water for a simple spring pasta.

### **Creamy Style**

Blend a small portion of the vegetables and stir back in for a silkier texture.

### **No Fava Beans?**

Substitute with edamame or extra peas.

## What to Serve with Vignarola

- Grilled or roasted vegetables
- Crusty bread for soaking up the broth
- Or enjoy it as a light main dish on its own

## • Storage

- Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 3 days.
- Reheat gently on the stovetop with a splash of broth or water.
- **Freezing:** This stew freezes well for up to 2 months. Thaw in the fridge overnight and reheat gently on the stove.

If you love simple, seasonal Italian cooking, this

spring stew is one to keep on repeat. Save it for later, and don't forget to try it as a pasta—it's a game changer.

For more classic Italian recipes, check out:

- My asparagus lemon pasta
- My minestrone soup
- Or my personal favorite Annelletti al forno Authentic Sicilian baked pasta recipe

## **Italian Spring Stew with Artichokes, Fava Beans & Peas (Vignarola Recipe)**



A classic Italian spring stew made with artichokes, fava beans, and peas. This traditional Roman vignarola recipe is fresh, simple, and full of seasonal flavor.

- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion (you can use Spring onions)
- 2 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 3 artichokes (cleaned & sliced)
- 1 cup fava beans (peeled)

- 1 cup peas (shelled)
- 3 cups romaine lettuce (chopped)
- 1 cup white wine
- 1/2-1 cup vegetable stock
- salt and pepper to taste

1. **Build the base** Heat olive oil in a large pan. Add onions and garlic. Cook until soft and fragrant.
2. **Cook the artichokes** Add sliced artichokes first and cook for 5–7 minutes until they begin to soften.
3. **Deglaze** Pour in white wine (if using) and let it reduce slightly.
4. **Add the vegetables** Stir in fava beans, peas, and chopped romaine.
5. **Simmer** Add vegetable broth, cover, and cook on low for 15–20 minutes until everything is tender and silky.
6. **Finish** Season with salt and pepper. Stir in fresh mint or parsley right before serving.

**Cleaning Artichokes:** Fresh artichokes are beautiful but a little tricky to prep. Start by trimming the tough outer leaves and cutting off the sharp tips. Remove the stem and peel away any fibrous layers until you reach the tender heart. Slice and cook immediately to prevent browning, or toss with a little lemon juice. If you'd rather skip the prep, many grocery stores now sell **pre-cleaned, trimmed artichoke hearts**—perfect for a quick, no-fuss vignarola.

Side Dish

Italian

Vignarola, Italian, stew, artichokes, fava , beans

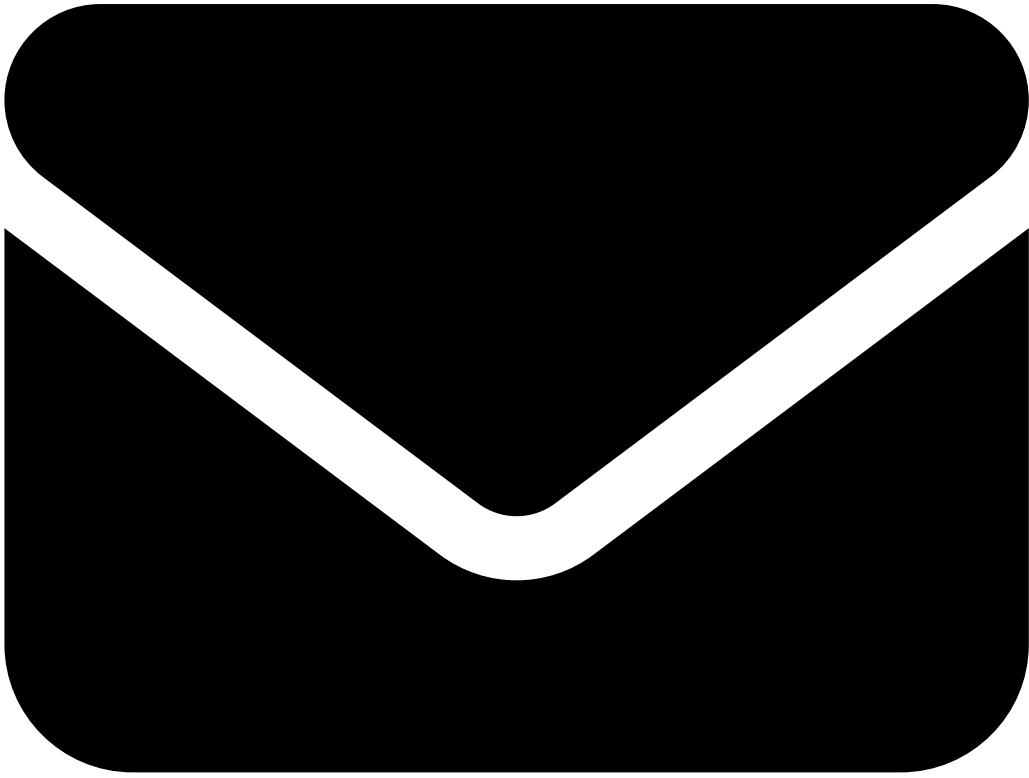
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# **Anelletti al Forno: Authentic Sicilian Baked Pasta Recipe**

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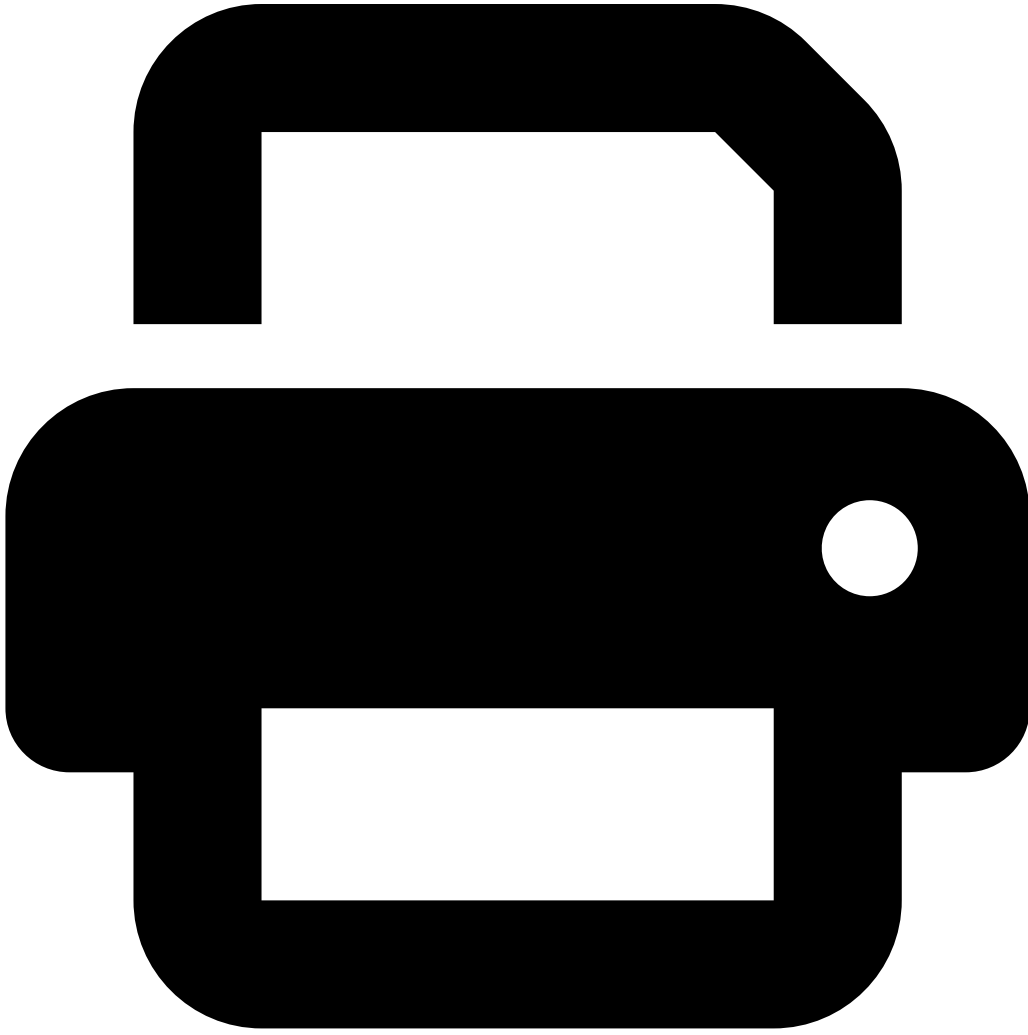
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If there's one dish that captures the heart of Sicilian home cooking, it's Anelletti al Forno. Made with tiny ring-shaped pasta, a rich ragù, sweet peas, and melty cheese, this baked pasta is as nostalgic as it is satisfying.

Unlike your typical baked ziti, this dish is layered and compact—almost like a pasta pie—meant to be sliced and served. It's the kind of recipe that shows up at holidays, Sunday dinners, and special occasions, bringing everyone to the table.

What makes it truly special is the balance of flavors and textures: tender pasta, savory meat sauce, pops of sweetness from peas, and that golden, breadcrumb topping. It's rustic, it's hearty, and it's pure Italian comfort.

# Things to know about this Anelletti al Forno: Authentic Sicilian Baked Pasta Recipe

- **Undercook your pasta** slightly–this keeps it from getting mushy as it bakes.
- **Let it rest before slicing**–this is key for that signature “pasta cake” structure.
- **Breadcrumbs matter**–they give you that classic crisp Sicilian top layer.
- You can swap in **caciocavallo** or **pecorino** for a more traditional flavor.
- This dish is even better **the next day**, making it perfect for prepping ahead.

## • Storage

- **Refrigerator:** 3–4 days in airtight container
- **Freezer:** 2–3 months; slice before freezing for easy portions. Reheat in oven at 350°F

For **Anelletti al forno**, the ideal pan is:

- **9×13-inch (23×33 cm) rectangular baking dish** – classic size, works well for layering and slicing.
- **Optional:** For a more “pasta cake” presentation, you can use a **round 9-inch (23 cm) springform pan**. This makes it easier to unmold and slice into wedges.
- Loved this Sicilian classic? You might also enjoy some of my other comforting Italian favorites:
  - My rich and simple **Sunday marinara sauce** (perfect base for this dish)
  - Creamy **crepelle parmigiano al brodo** for another baked classic
  - Or my bright **lemon asparagus pasta** for a lighter, spring-inspired option

□ Head to the blog for the full recipe and step-by-step instructions, and don't forget to save this one—it's a crowd-pleaser every time.

## Anelletti al Forno: Authentic Sicilian Baked Pasta Recipe



A traditional Sicilian baked pasta made with anelletti, rich meat sauce, peas, and cheese—this Anelletti al Forno is the ultimate comforting, sliceable pasta dish perfect for gatherings.

- 1 Lbs. Anelletti (small ring pasta)
- 3 Tbsp Olive oil
- 1 cup onion (chopped)
- 1/2 Lb. Ground beef
- 1/2 Lb. Ground pork (or Italian sausage)
- 2 cups peas
- 2 cups sauce
- 2 Tbsp. Tomato paste
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup red wine

- 1 cup grated parmesan
- 2 cups Diced mozzarella
- 1 cup grated breadcrumbs

1. **Cook pasta** until just shy of al dente. Drain.
2. **Make sauce:** sauté onion in olive oil → add meat, brown → deglaze with wine → stir in tomato paste + marinara → simmer 30 minutes
3. Stir in peas, season to taste.
4. **Mix** pasta with sauce, grated cheese, and mozzarella.
5. **Assemble:**  
  
Grease a **9×13-inch (23×33 cm) rectangular baking dish** or a **9-inch (23 cm) round springform pan** for a sliceable “pasta cake. Sprinkle a layer of breadcrumbs, add pasta mixture, top with more breadcrumbs + cheese.
6. **Bake** at 375°F for **50–60 minutes** until golden and bubbling.
7. **Rest** 10–15 min before slicing to hold shape.

9×13-inch (23×33 cm) rectangular baking dish

Main Course

Italian

Anelletti, baked, Silician

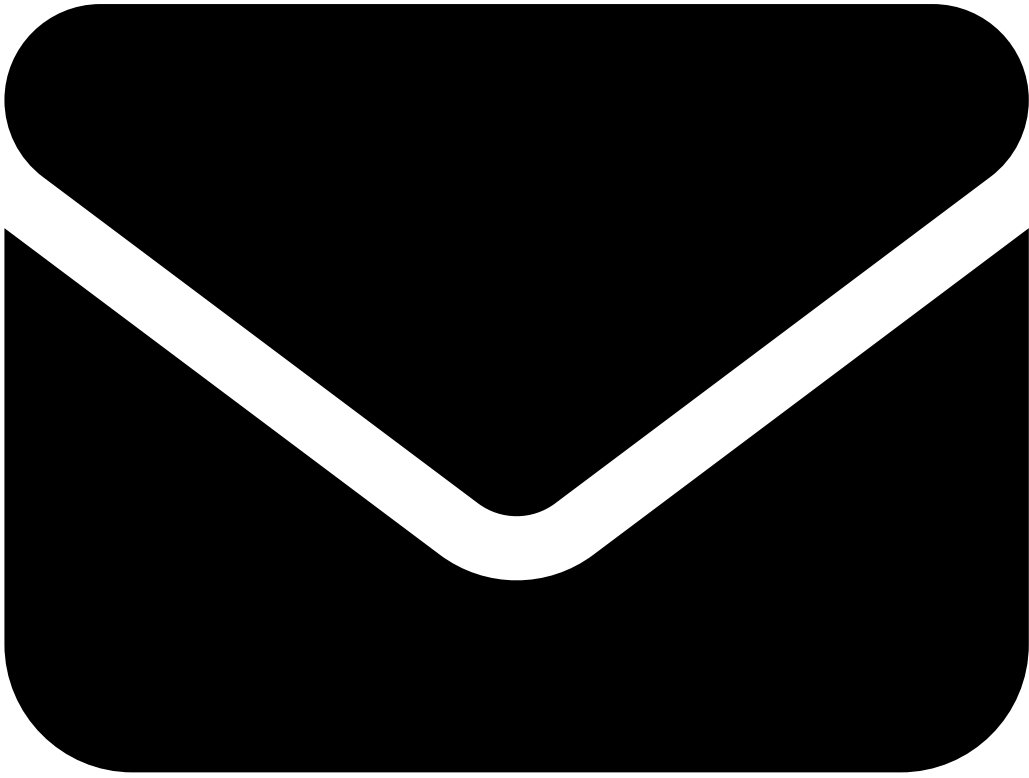
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# Lemon Asparagus Ricciarelle Pasta

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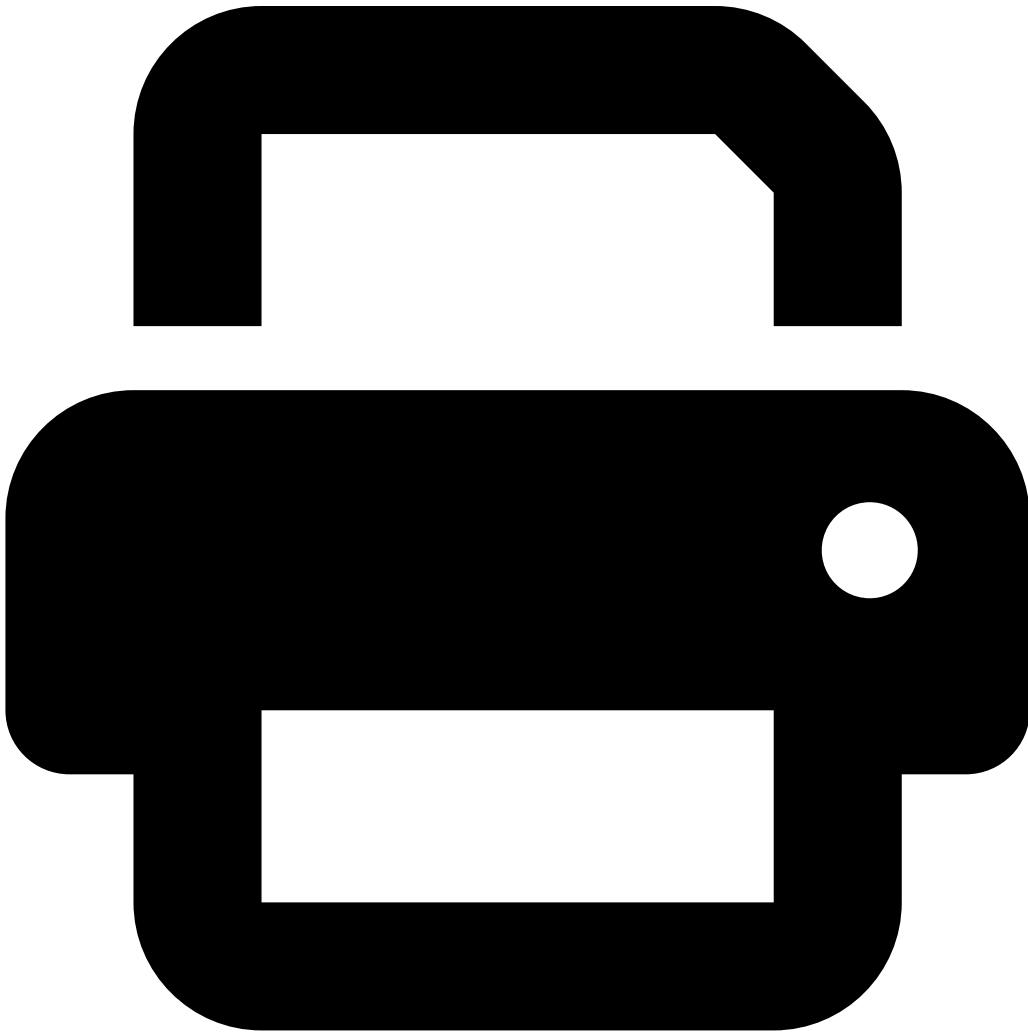
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Spring is all about fresh, vibrant flavors, and nothing says “springtime on a plate” quite like this **Lemon Asparagus Ricciarelle Pasta**. The curly, ribbon-like ricciarelle pasta holds onto every bit of the zesty lemon sauce, while the sautéed asparagus adds tender-crisp bites.

To elevate the dish, we puree **half of the asparagus** to create a silky sauce that clings to the pasta, giving each bite a luxurious texture without adding cream. It’s simple, bright, and elegant—perfect for a weeknight dinner or a light spring gathering.

Whether cooking for your family, hosting friends, or craving something fresh for yourself, this pasta is a seasonal star. Pair it with a crisp white wine or a simple green salad, and you’ve got a meal that feels indulgent yet effortless.

# Things to know about this Lemon Asparagus Ricciarelle Pasta

- **Pureeing half the asparagus:** This creates a silky, smooth sauce that coats the pasta while still giving you tender asparagus bites.
- **Cream optional:** Pureeing the asparagus gives a creamy texture naturally; cream is only needed if you want it extra rich.
- **Leftovers:** Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 2 days. Reheat gently with a splash of olive oil or water.
- **Pasta variations:** While ricciarelle is ideal for holding the sauce, you can experiment with other short, ridged, or twisted pasta like cavatelli, fusilli, or campanelle. Each shape will change how the sauce clings and the overall bite of the dish.
- **Flavor variations:** Add a pinch of red pepper flakes for heat, or mix in toasted pine nuts for crunch.

Love this recipe? Explore more **spring-inspired pasta dishes** on the blog! Try my Asparagus, pancetta and lemon lasagna for another light and vibrant spring time meal, or check out my one pot creamy zucchini pasta for a delicious quick meal that uses few ingredients.

Sign up for my newsletter to get seasonal recipes, kitchen tips, and cooking inspiration delivered straight to your inbox!

## Lemon Asparagus Ricciarelle Pasta



Light, fresh, and full of spring flavors! This **Lemon Asparagus Ricciarelle Pasta** features tender sautéed asparagus, bright lemon sauce, and Parmesan, perfect for an easy weeknight dinner or elegant spring meal.

- 12 Oz. Ricciarelle pasta (Use any shape pasta)
  - 1 Lb. Asparagus (trimmed and cut into 2-inch pieces)
  - 4 Tbsp. olive oil
  - 2 gloves garlic (minced)
  - 1 Tbsp. lemon rind
  - 1/3 cup lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
  - 1/2 cup **Parmesan cheese** (grated)
  - 1 cup pasta water (reserve before draining, always same more than recipe calls for )
  - 1/3 cup Italian parsley (chopped)
  - salt and pepper (to taste)
1. **Cook the pasta:** Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the ricciarelle pasta according to package instructions. Drain, reserving 2 cups of pasta water.
  2. **Sauté the asparagus:** Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add asparagus and sauté for 4–5 minutes until tender-crisp. Add garlic during the last minute.
  3. **Puree half the asparagus:** Transfer half of the sautéed asparagus to a blender or food processor and puree until smooth. Return the puree to the skillet with the remaining whole asparagus.

4. **Make the sauce:** Lower the heat, then add lemon zest, lemon juice, and Parmesan to the skillet. Stir in the cooked pasta. If using cream, add now. Toss everything together, adding reserved pasta water a little at a time until the sauce reaches your desired consistency.
5. **Season and serve:** Taste and season with salt and pepper. Serve immediately, garnished with fresh parsley and extra Parmesan if desired.

Main Course

Italian

Asparagus Italian, pasta

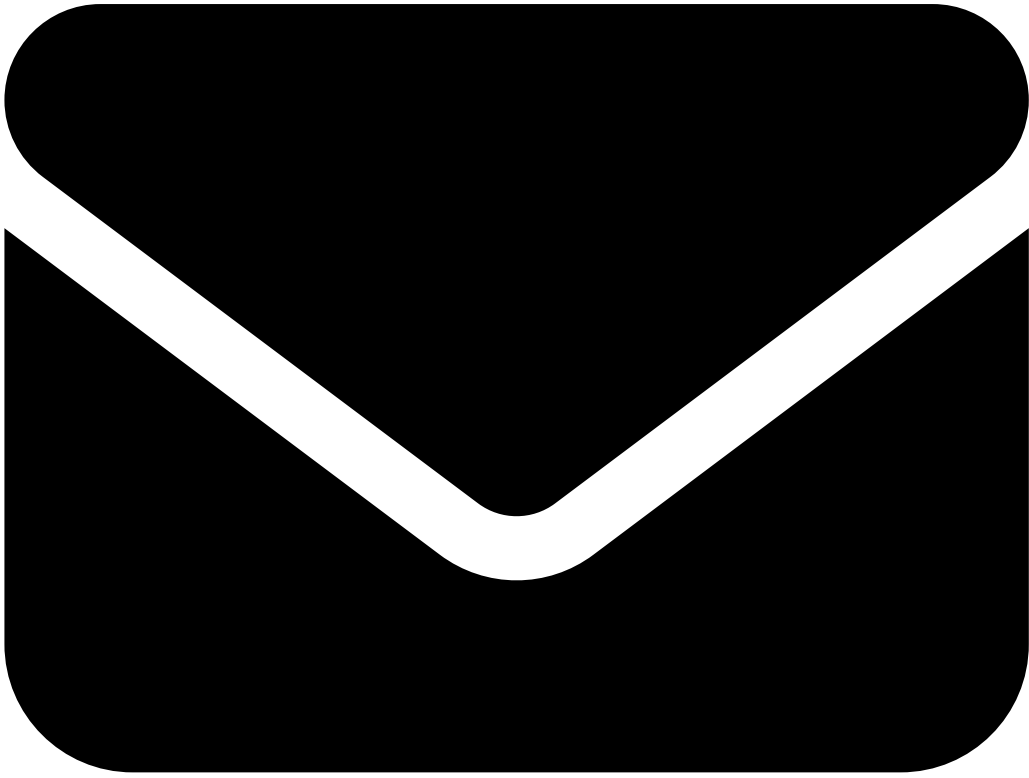
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**Casatiello                      Traditional  
Italian savory Easter Bread**

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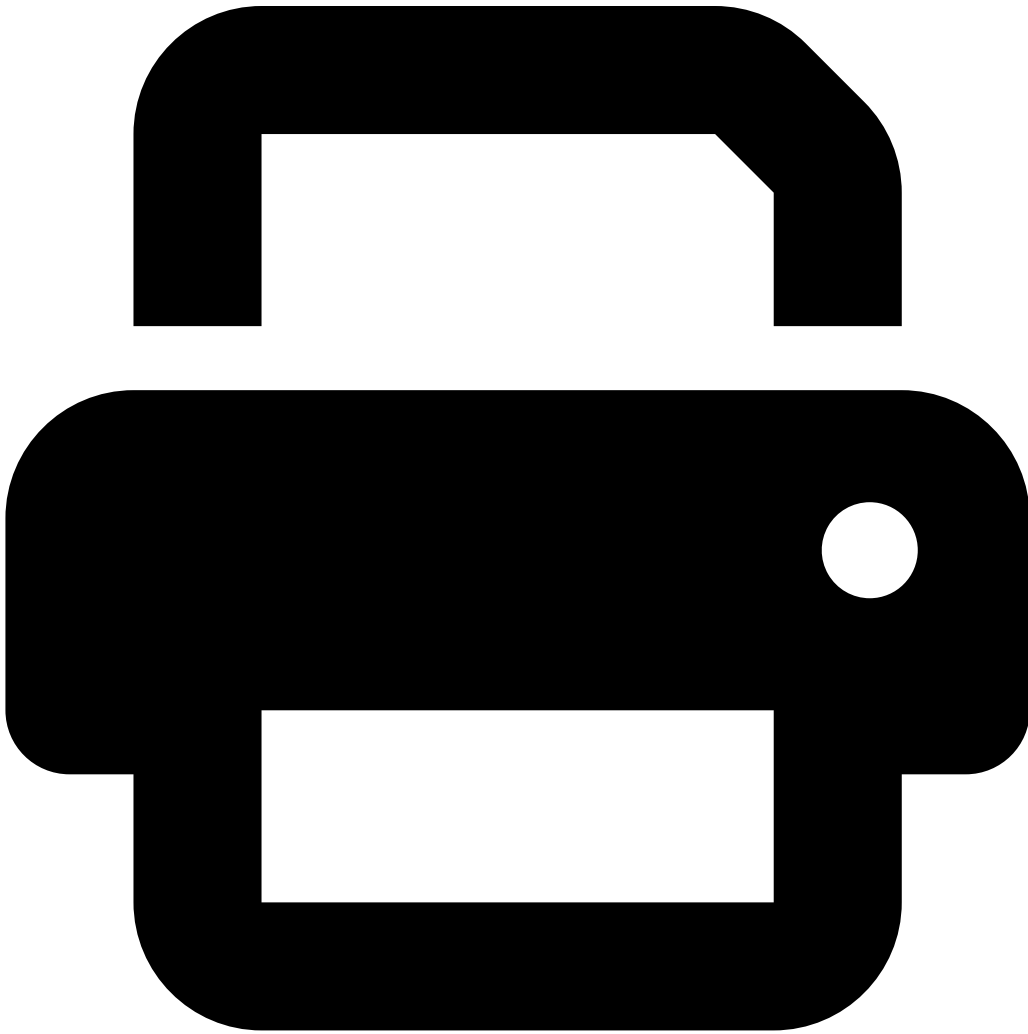
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Every Easter, my kitchen smells like a little slice of Naples. My mom used to make **Casatiello**, a rich, savory bread packed with salami, mortadella, and cheese, baked into a golden ring. There's something about this bread—the way the dough is soft and eggy, the pockets of melted cheese, the salty bite of cured meats—that just *screams* Easter morning.

Casatiello has been a Neapolitan tradition for centuries. Originally, it was a celebratory bread meant to carry all the flavors of the pantry, symbolizing abundance and new life during the holiday. The eggs tucked on top? They're not just decorative—they represent fertility and rebirth, a little Easter symbolism baked right in.

This recipe is my take on that classic, with **eggs in the dough for extra richness**, so every bite tastes like home and tradition.

# Things to know about this Casatiello Traditional Italian savory Easter Bread

- Adding the **3 eggs directly into the dough** makes the Casatiello rich, soft, and extra tender.
- Some families also like to **nest raw eggs on top of the dough in a cross pattern** before baking—this is a traditional Easter symbol representing new life and fertility. If you do this, make sure the eggs are clean and securely tucked into the dough so they bake safely.
- Don't skip the black pepper—it's part of the classic flavor.
- Cut meats and cheese into small, even cubes for better distribution.
- Slightly overfilling is traditional—this bread is meant to be hearty and rustic.

## Serving

Serve slightly warm or at room temperature. Slice into wedges and enjoy as part of your Easter spread, on an antipasto board, or alongside eggs and fresh fruit for breakfast. It's rich, so a little goes a long way—but no one ever stops at one slice.

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## □ Storage

- **Room temperature:** Wrap tightly and keep for up to 2–3 days
- **Refrigerator:** Store up to 5 days
- **Freezer:** Slice and freeze for up to 2 months

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## □ Reheating

- Warm slices in a **300°F oven** for 10–15 minutes
- Or microwave for 20–30 seconds for a quick reheat
- For best texture, avoid overheating—the cheese should be soft, not greasy

## ▪ Want More Italian Recipes?

- Try my spinach Italian Easter Bread (Pane di Pasqua) for a sweet bread version.
- Or check out my **Italian Braided lemon cookies** for something sweet to balance the table.

## Casatiello: Traditional Italian Easter Bread



Traditional Italian Casatiello made with eggs in the dough, loaded with salami, mortadella, and cheese, and baked into a golden Easter bread ring.

- 4 cups flour (all purpose flour)
- 1 package dry yeast (2  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp active dry yeast)
- 1 cup warm water

- 1 tsp. sugar
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup olive oil (or lard for traditional flavor))
- 3 medium eggs
- 1 tsp. Black pepper
- 1 cup diced salami ( for the filling)
- 1 cup diced mortadella (for the filling)
- 1 cup diced provolone (for the filling)
- 1 cup diced mozzarella (for the filling)
- 1/2 cup grated pecorino Romano (for the filling)
- 3-4 eggs raw in the shell (Optional topping)
- Extra dough strips for crossing (Optional topping)

1. **Activate the yeast** In a small bowl, combine warm water, sugar, and yeast. Let sit 5–10 minutes until foamy.
2. **Make the dough** In a large bowl, mix flour, salt, and black pepper. Add the yeast mixture, olive oil, and eggs. Mix until a soft dough forms.
3. **Knead** Knead for 8–10 minutes until smooth and elastic.
4. **First rise (without filling)** Place dough in an oiled bowl, cover, and let rise 1–2 hours until doubled.
5. **Incorporate the filling** Gently punch down the risen dough. Flatten slightly and sprinkle in the diced salami, mortadella, and cheeses. Fold and knead just enough to **distribute the filling evenly** without deflating the dough too much.
6. **Shape** Roll into a long log and form into a ring. Place in a greased bundt or round pan.
7. **Add eggs (optional)** Nestle whole eggs into the dough and secure with strips of dough in a cross.
8. **Second rise** Cover and let rise 45–60 minutes until puffy.

9. **Bake** Bake at **375°F (190°C)** for **40–50 minutes**, until golden brown. Tent with foil if browning too fast.

Appetizer

Italian

Italian, Bread< Easter, Casatiello

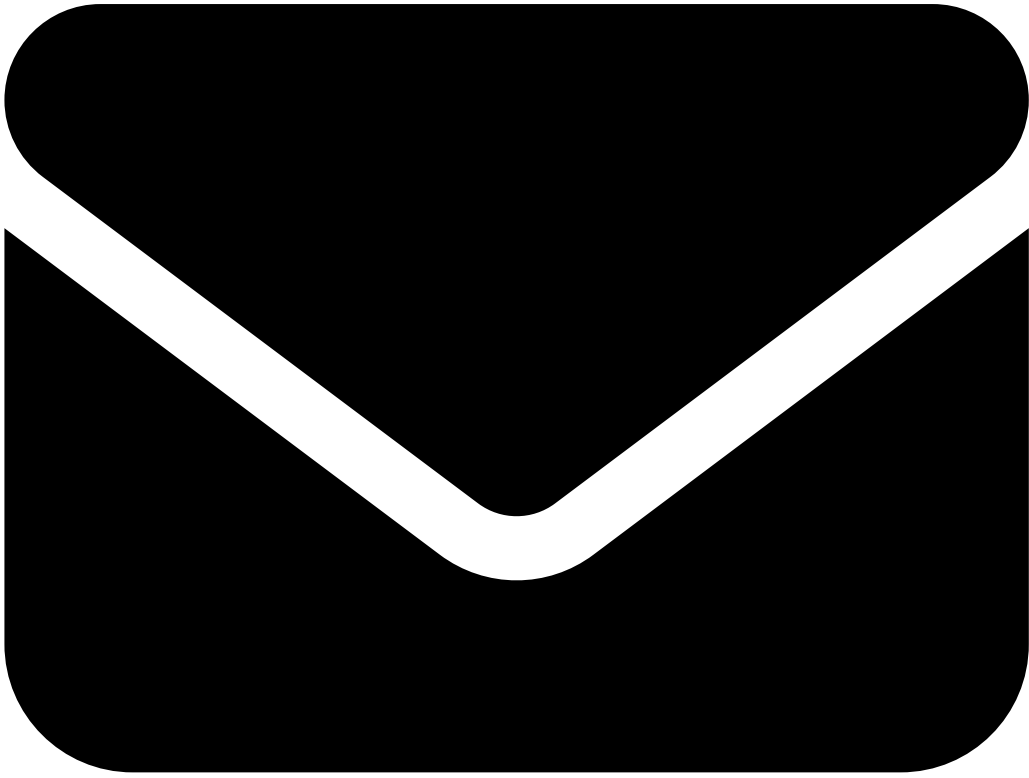
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## **Asparagus, Prosciutto & Lemon Béchamel Lasagna**

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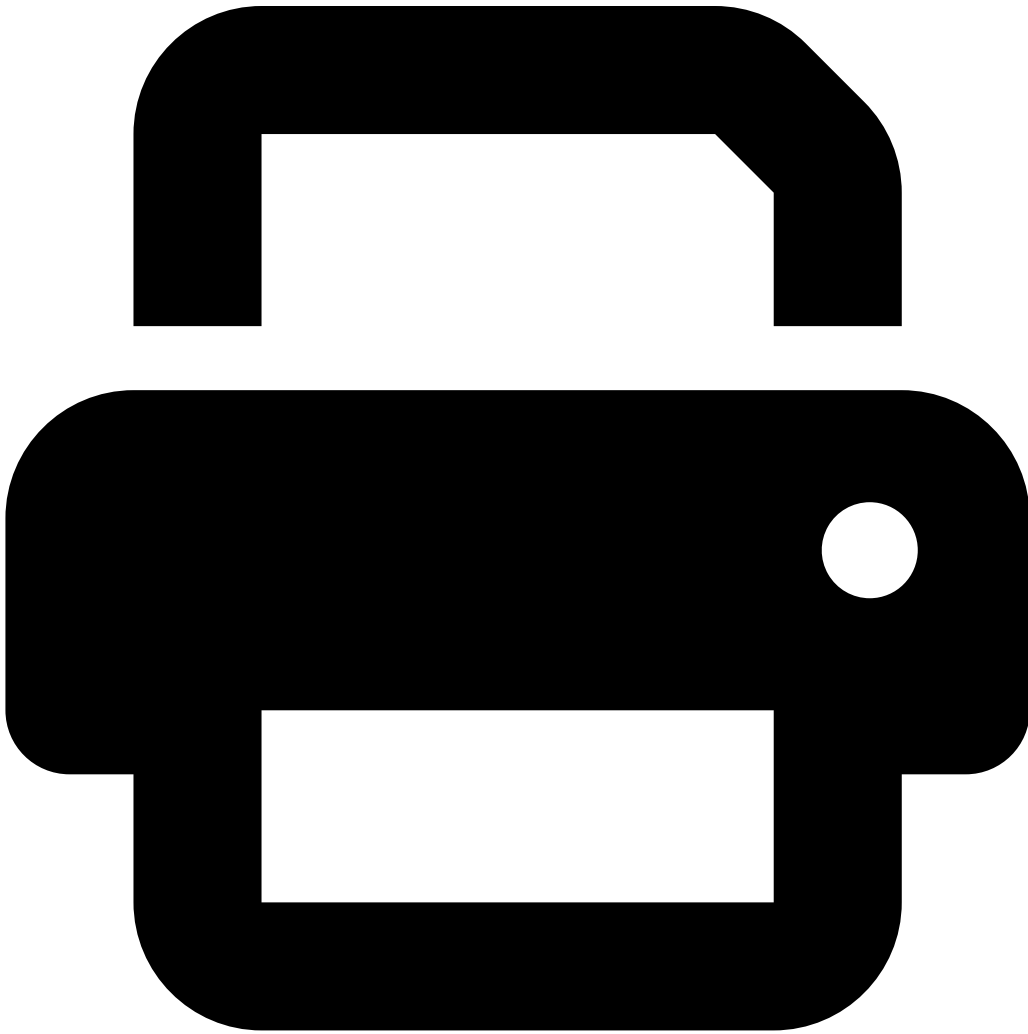
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There's something about spring that makes me want to put away the heavy red sauce and cook a little lighter—but not boring. This asparagus lasagna is exactly that. Layers of tender pasta, a silky lemon béchamel, and a ricotta filling that actually holds its shape when you slice into it.

I used store-bought lasagna noodles that needed to be boiled first, and honestly, it's worth the extra step. You get better texture, cleaner layers, and a more traditional feel than the no-boil kind.

It's the kind of dish that feels like it came out of a small kitchen somewhere in Northern Italy—simple, seasonal, and just indulgent enough. And yes, it's a showstopper, but it's also one of those recipes you'll realize is way easier than it looks.

# Things to know about this Asparagus, Prosciutto & Lemon Béchamel Lasagna

- **Use the right noodles**

I used classic store-bought lasagna sheets that require boiling. Cook them just to al dente—they'll finish in the oven and give you the best texture. And the right size pan

- **Blanch your asparagus**

This keeps it bright green and prevents excess water from ruining your layers.

- **Dry everything well**

Moisture is the enemy of a clean slice.

- **Your béchamel matters**

It should be smooth and pourable—not thick like paste.

- **The ricotta mixture is key**

Adding egg + Parmigiano-Reggiano + parsley gives you structure and that bakery-style finish.

- **Don't over-layer**

Thin, even layers = better texture and cleaner cuts.

- **Let it rest**

15–20 minutes makes all the difference between messy and perfect.

- If you love recipes like this that feel a little elevated but are still completely doable at home, you'll want to try my Italian Sunday Sauce with meatballs and my Italian Meatloaf with roasted potatoes—both are staples that instantly upgrade simple ingredients.

# Asparagus, Prosciutto, & Lemon Béchamel Lasagna



Creamy asparagus lasagna made with silky lemon béchamel, pancetta, and layers of tender pasta—no red sauce, just a rich, spring-inspired twist on classic comfort food.

- 4 Tbsp. butter (for the Béchamel sauce )
- 4 Tbsp. flour (for the Béchamel sauce )
- 3 cups milk (warmed for the Béchamel sauce )
- 1 Tbsp. lemon zest (for the Béchamel sauce )
- Salt and pepper (to taste)
- 9 lasagna Sheets (Store bought or homemade)
- 1 bunch asparagus (For the filling)
- 4 oz. prosciutto (For the filling)
- 2 cups ricotta (For the filling)
- 1 egg (For the filling)
- 1/2 cup Grated parmesan cheese (For the filling)
- 2 Tbsp. chopped Italian parsley (For the filling)

1. 1. Par boil the lasagna noodles . Let dry on tea towels
2. 2. **Prep the asparagus** Blanch in salted water for 2–3 minutes → transfer to ice water → drain very well and pat dry. Cut into 2-inch pieces.
3. 3. **Cook the prosciutto** Render in a pan until crispy. Remove and set aside.

#### 4. 3. Make the béchamel

□ Should be silky and pourable—not thick and heavy

Melt butter, whisk in flour (1–2 minutes, no browning) Slowly whisk in warm milk. Simmer until smooth and coats the back of a spoon Stir in salt, pepper, and lemon zest.

#### 5. 4. Make the ricotta layer In a bowl, mix:

Ricotta 1 egg Grated Parmigiano-Chopped parsley Pinch of salt + pepper

#### 6. 5. Assemble

Layer in this order:

Thin layer of béchamel

Lasagna sheets

Béchamel

Ricotta mixture (spread lightly)

Asparagus + pancetta

Repeat layers 2–3 times.

Finish with Lasagna noodle béchamel + extra parmesan cheese

#### 7. 6. Bake 375°F for 1 hour or until golden on top and bubbling at the edges

#### 8. 7. Rest (don't skip) Let sit 15–20 minutes before slicing

□ This is the difference between:

messy scoop to clean, *perfect* slices

Main Course

Italian

Italian asparagus, lasagna