

Betty's Spaghetti

SERVES 4

This is Thomas Keller's exuberantly updated version of a dish (facing page) often prepared by his mother, Elizabeth Marie "Betty" Keller, during his childhood. She used cottage cheese in lieu of ricotta cheese.

1/4 cup flour	Stems from 2 sprigs parsley, cut into 1/2" pieces
1 cup plus 2 tbsp. canola oil	1/2 lb. dried spaghetti
2 large shallots, 1 cut into 1/8" rings, 1 finely chopped	2/3 cup ricotta cheese
8 tbsp. butter	1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 tsp. white wine vinegar	Freshly ground black pepper
Salt	1 tsp. finely minced parsley
	16 cilantro shoots (optional)

1. Put flour into a wide shallow dish. Heat 1 cup canola oil in a small pot over medium heat until it registers 325° on a deep-fry thermometer. Working in 2 batches, toss shallot rings in flour to coat and shake off any excess. Fry shallots, stirring gently, until golden brown, about 1 1/2 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer fried shallots to a paper towel-lined plate to let drain. Set shallot rings aside.

2. Heat remaining canola oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add chopped shallots and cook just until beginning to caramelize, 3-4 minutes. Add butter, vinegar, and 1 cup water; cook until reduced by about one-third, 18-20 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add parsley stems and cook for 10 seconds. Transfer stems to a colander in the sink and rinse under cold water. Add spaghetti to boiling water and cook until al dente, 8-10 minutes. Drain spaghetti and add to skillet with shallot reduction; toss to combine. Add cooked parsley stems, ricotta, olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste and toss to combine. Divide spaghetti between 4 warm bowls. Garnish with minced parsley, cilantro shoots, and fried shallot rings. Serve immediately.