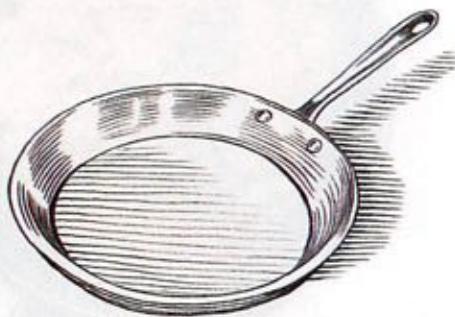


# 1

## FORGET THE POT.



## USE A PAN

Ever notice that the pasta you get at top-flight restaurants is different from what you make at home? It's glossy and luxurious, each strand of pasta coated with sauce. The key to pasta this transcendent is a sauté pan. That's what the pros use to cook almost-done pasta and sauce together—until there's pomodoro clinging to every bite of bucatini, until each raviolo is lacquered with sage-flecked brown butter. It's a unified, flavor-packed dish, not a bowl of noodles with a bunch of sauce dumped on top. **To make your own restaurant-worthy pasta, grab a sauté pan** (use one that's either 10" or 12" in diameter) and get started.



# 2

## BUILD THE FOUNDATION

At its most basic, a pasta sauce requires just a handful of ingredients and 20 minutes of cooking time. **To make a classic pan sauce**, heat olive oil, sauté garlic, add a vegetable or two and then—here's the important part—a generous amount of pasta water. The starchy water and oil simmer together, forming the foundation of a sauce. We love a long-simmered ragù, but this is the technique we return to again and again. The following pages lay out the principles to perfecting this essential sauce, culminating in a step-by-step summary in Rule No. 10.

### THE SAUCE OF THE MOMENT

#### CACIO E PEPE

SERVES 2

If one pasta dish exemplifies the complexity of pan sauce precision, it's *cacio e pepe* (literally, cheese and pepper). The minimalist recipe calls for only a few ingredients and doesn't even include garlic. But the techniques outlined here elevate the dish to something magnificent. The creamy swirl of noodles is like a stripped-down mac and cheese—only more elegant and easier to make. No wonder it's on the menus of America's most stylish Italian restaurants. It's a simple standard by which cooks are measured, yet no two chefs agree on how to do it right. We sorted through the variations and found it works best with a mix of Grana Padano (velvety) and Pecorino (sharp) cheeses, and freshly cracked black pepper (you should taste the heat).

#### Kosher salt

- 6 oz. pasta (such as egg tagliolini, bucatini, or spaghetti)
- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed, divided
- 1 tsp. freshly cracked black pepper
- ¼ cup finely grated Grana Padano or Parmesan
- ½ cup finely grated Pecorino

Bring 3 quarts water to a boil in a 5-qt. pot. Season with salt; add pasta and cook, stirring occasionally, until about 2 minutes before tender. Drain, reserving ½ cup pasta cooking water.

Meanwhile, melt 2 Tbsp. butter in a large heavy skillet over medium heat. Add pepper and cook, swirling pan, until toasted, about 1 minute.

Add ½ cup reserved pasta water to skillet and bring to a simmer. Add pasta and remaining butter. Reduce heat to low and add Grana Padano, stirring and tossing with tongs until melted. Remove pan from heat; add Pecorino, stirring and tossing until cheese melts, sauce coats the pasta, and pasta is al dente. (Add more pasta water if sauce seems dry.) Transfer pasta to warm bowls and serve.

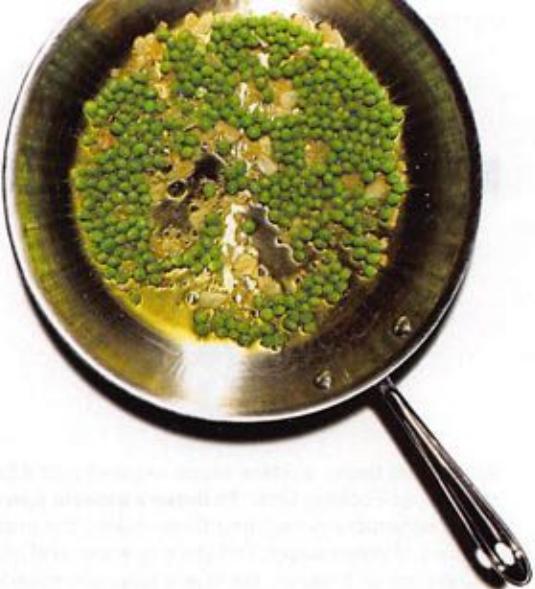
Del Posto's Mark Ladner demonstrates the quintessential *cacio e pepe* at [BONAPPETIT.COM/GO/CACIO](http://BONAPPETIT.COM/GO/CACIO)



# 3

## YOU'RE NOT USING NEARLY ENOUGH SALT

**Add a small handful of kosher salt to a pot of boiling water**, then drop in the pasta. The noodles absorb water as they cook, so you're actually seasoning the interior of an otherwise bland starch. Mark Ladner, executive chef at Del Posto in New York City, says the water should taste "almost as salty as seawater." For Ladner, that's about 1 Tbsp. salt for every quart of water, but you don't have to be so particular—just throw it in there.



Like the look of this fettuccine with peas and mint? Read our manifesto and you'll be able to cook it tonight—no recipe required. (See Rule No. 10 for a cheat sheet.)

