

## **BUCATINI AMATRICIANA**



### **Serve 4**

Bucatini all' amatriciana is an ode to simplicity – rich smoked pork, sweet tomatoes, heat from chili peppers, and the sharp, salty kick of pecorino cheese. Because amatriciana is a classic dish it has a long history and because it is Italian, this history is controversial and hotly disputed. Most but not all agree that “amatriciana” comes from Amatrice, a tiny town in the mountains bordering Abruzzi about 100 miles from Rome. (Some Romans claim that the dish is truly all' matriciana, developed by Romans and that Amatrice has nothing to do with such culinary bliss). Most agree that the dish descends from gricia, a pasta dish made with pepper, cheese, and smoked pork jowl, also known as guanciale.

Bucatini all' amatriciana has a different flavor profile than most Italian pasta. In its purest, most classic form the sauce has only four ingredients: cured pork, tomatoes, cheese, and hot peppers. Because of the recipe's poor origins (this was the dish of shepherds, not statesmen), there is traditionally no onion, no garlic, no herbs. Because of this it tastes wildly different from the familiar Italian-American tomato sauce served with spaghetti and meatballs. The modern Roman version often adds onions, garlic, or a splash of dry white wine.

Best of all it comes with bucatini, a kind of pleasantly plummeted up version of spaghetti that has an irresistible spongy surface to soak up the sauce.

### **Ingredients**

8 oz. bucatini or spaghetti

1 T. olive oil

100 g or 3.5 oz. guanciale or pancetta (about  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup diced)

100 g grated pecorino Romano (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup)

1 yellow onion, diced

1 14 oz. can Italian plum tomatoes

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. hot pepper flakes, or more to taste

### **Directions**

1. Place a large pot of water to boil. Put in a small handful of large-grain salt.
2. Dice the guanciale into medium pieces, cubes of about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch. Be wary of dicing the meat too small, if so it will be easier to overcook and you're aiming for tender rather than crispy.
3. Sautee the guanciale and hot pepper in the olive oil in a pan over medium heat. As soon as the fat becomes translucent, remove the meat and set to drain on a paper towel.
4. Add onions to the rendered fat and sauté, stirring constantly, until translucent. Add the tomatoes and the guanciale. Simmer on low heat about 5-10 minutes.
5. When the water comes to a boil, add the pasta. Traditionally you use bucatini or spaghetti, though rigatoni is also an excellent partner for amatriciana. Cook the pasta 1 minute less than the package states. Drain the pasta and add it to the pan with the sauce. Toss with the sauce and add the pecorino Romano, stirring constantly so that the melted cheese coats the pasta. Remove from heat and serve immediately with additional grated pecorino for sprinkling on top.