

Quick weeknight supper

 By [Nina Timm](#)

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Pasta Puttanesca literally translated as 'spaghetti in the style of a prostitute' is most probably the quickest pasta you will ever make (well, maybe my Pesto Pasta is quicker). It is a tangy, somewhat salty, Italian pasta dish, dating back to the mid-20th century. I am not sure how this recipe is linked to prostitution, but maybe 'salty' and 'slightly tangy' have something to do with it.



Pasta Puttanesca is made with ingredients typical to Southern Italian cuisine: tomatoes, olive oil, anchovies, olives, capers, and garlic. Although I love the capers and anchovies, many versions of Pasta Puttanesca exclude either one or the other. Traditionally, the sauce is served with spaghetti, although it also goes well with penne, bucatini, linguine and vermicelli.

I love the fact that this dish is delicious hot or cold. Because there is quite a bit of olive oil in the recipe, the pasta doesn't stick together when cold. So it makes perfect sense to make a bowl of this over the weekend to enjoy with your braai and then have some left over for the week's lunchboxes. If you insist on having a protein with it, a grilled piece of yellowtail, grilled chicken or a steak will do just fine.

Just one word of advice: the anchovies and olives are already salty, so be careful when you add seasoning to the dish. Add salt right at the end of the process. We like loads of grated Parmesan on it, but even that is a bastardised version, chopped parsley is the way to go.

Ingredients (serves four to six):

- 500g penne – cooked according to packet instructions;
- Two cloves garlic;
- 45ml Olyfberg Olive Oil;
- One small jar or 200ml capers – drained and chopped;
- 250ml black olives – pitted and roughly chopped;
- Eight to 10 anchovy fillets – chopped;

- Two red chillies – finely chopped;
- 500g cocktail tomatoes – you can use canned tomatoes, but I like the texture of using fresh tomatoes;
- A handful of fresh oregano;
- A handful of fresh basil; and
- Salt and pepper, if needed.

Method

Heat a pot on the stove top and add the olive oil. Saute the garlic, anchovies, chillies, capers and olives. Be careful not to burn the garlic as it will add a bitter taste to your dish. Add the tomatoes and the oregano and reduce the heat. Allow the pot to slow simmer so that the tomatoes can burst open and release their own juices. If you find your sauce too dry, add a little water or stock. With tinned tomatoes, you will have more liquid than when using fresh.

Once you have a sauce consistency add the pasta and mix. Serve with chopped parsley, crusty bread and parmesan if you must.

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ABOUT NINA TIMM

I am the owner and sole editor of the 2012 Eat Out Award-winning blog, My Easy Cooking. I cook, I style and I photograph every single day of my life. I run a cooking school for groups such as team building, birthday parties, friendship groups, domestic workers and children.

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