

Wholemeal spelt pasta

Takes 30 minutes + resting time, serves 2-4 and uses a pasta machine

INGREDIENTS

200g wholemeal spelt flour

A pinch of salt

2 large eggs

2 teaspoons olive oil

Water, as required

DIRECTIONS

Sift your spelt flour, discarding the rough, large bran pieces that are left in the sieve and weigh it. You need to make sure you have 200g of sieved flour left, after the bran is removed, so you may need to start with a little more than 200g.

Crack your eggs into a cup or bowl, add the olive oil and gently whisk with a fork until well mixed.

Clean and dry your worktop, then put your flour onto it in a pile. Make a well in the middle of the flour, easily large enough to hold all of the egg mixture. Pour the egg mixture into the well.

Using your fork, gently whisk the egg mixture, bringing bits of flour into the mix from the edges each time you go around. Continue doing this until it's combined as much as possible with a fork, then start using your hand to bring it all together.

It's at this point that the mixture will be ridiculously sticky. It will feel like there is more of it stuck to your hand than there is on the worktop. Mix with one hand and keep the other clean to hold a fork or bench scraper, so that you can regularly scrape down your hand and surface, to bring all the errant bits together.

If you keep mixing through this stage, it should ease into a manageable, smooth lump. If it's all mixed into a ball but won't go past being ridiculously sticky, throw on a pinch of flour and mix a bit more. If you find the mixture is cracking, dry or crumbly, then add a teaspoon of water and mix a bit more. Knead it just a few times.

Once you have a smooth, soft ball, wrap it in cling film and leave to rest at room temperature for at least 15 minutes and up to a few hours.

The next stage is to roll it out, which you can do with a rolling pin or use a pasta machine. The pasta machine allows you to achieve a very uniform thickness easily, which would be much more tricky by hand. Starting with the thickest setting, roll the pasta through the machine's rollers. Move down a thickness and roll again. Repeat until at your desired thickness, but I would suggest not going to the thinnest setting with spelt as the pasta becomes delicate and might break.

Now, your pasta is ready to use in sheets or ravioli, or you can run it through the other side of your machine to cut into tagliatelle etc. If you want to dry it, hang the finished pasta over a wooden spoon, or get a pasta drying rack to hang it on, until it's hardened.

To cook your pasta, bring a large pan of salted water to the boil and add the pasta, stirring occasionally. Boil the pasta for about 4 minutes then drain and serve.

