



Linguine Alla Vongole

LINGUINE WITH CLAMS

(For 1 lb dried, store-bought pasta)

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 tsp finely chopped garlic

1 Tb finely chopped flat-leaf parsley

small pinch of red pepper flakes

48 baby clams in their shells, soaked for 5 minutes, rinsed and scrubbed under running water

salt

1/3 cup dry white wine

2 Tbs butter

The trick to getting the best flavor in this dish is to finish cooking the linguine in the pan along with the sauce so the pasta absorbs the juices that the clams gave off as they steamed open. The clams that take the longest to steam open in the pan are the freshest—don't discard them. Do, however, discard clams that are open when you buy them and don't snap shut if you tap them; they are dead.



Put the olive oil and garlic in a large skillet (large enough to hold the clams and the pasta later) over a medium-high heat and cook until the garlic begins to sizzle. Stir in the parsley and the red pepper flakes.

Add the clams in their shells, season with salt and stir well. Add the wine and cook, stirring occasionally, until the alcohol evaporates: about 1 minute. Once the wine has evaporated, cover the skillet to steam the clams open.

While the clams are steaming, bring 4 quarts of water to a boil in a large saucepan or pot.

Check the clams frequently, and when they have all opened, remove the skillet from the heat.

Add 1 tablespoon of salt to the boiling water. Drop in the pasta and stir until the strands are submerged. When the pasta is cooked *molto al dente* (about 1 minute away from being *al dente*), drain well.

Immediately, return the skillet with the clams to a medium heat and add the drained pasta so that it finishes cooking in the skillet. Cook until the pasta is *al dente* and most of the liquid in the skillet has evaporated. Stir in the butter and serve at once.



Rinse Clams and Remove Any That Are Opened