

PASTA with TUNA SAUCE and  
PONZI TAVOLA PINOT NOIR

Sometimes you have to make something from nothing. It's a challenge and so fun when a great, satisfying meal appears from nowhere... nowhere being when ingredients are limited to what's on hand in the depths of your fridge and pantry. I recently had occasion to come up with dinner for our family: sixteen mixed adults and kids and even the littlest were hungry. Just back from a trip, there was nothing remotely adequate in the fridge. Of course there was a store of dry pasta in the pantry... then, behind some mustard and pickles, I found several cans of Spanish tuna and a whole jar of capers. The San Marzano tomato storage spot was empty, but there were a few boxes of Pomi tomato sauce. With olive oil, garlic and olives that are always around—and some pleasant red wine—all the tummies got filled... and I got an idea for an *Amici* recipe suggestion! After all, our Tavola bottling of Pinot noir is blended to be welcoming and delicious, enjoyed at the table, with casual, comfortable family and friends.

Luisa, of course, would prefer to serve the 2007 Tavola with a somewhat more elegant entrée—grilled salmon or smoked pheasant—but there are times when dinner is last-minute pasta with tuna sauce, which, even she'll admit, isn't bad. In fact it may become a fast food favorite for you too. Just keep some off-beat important staples hidden in your pantry.

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Generally, my culinary motto is every dish can be varied depending on what you have, where you are and how much time you have. This following recipe is not precisely what was served on the evening described; you'll note I added a few enhancing ingredients here.

INGREDIENTS:

500 g. (1 package, bit less than 1 lb.) dry pasta – chitarra or spaghetti from Rustichella d'Abruzzo or other artisan producer  
Salt (1 T./qt. of water – 6 qt. water/lb. pasta)  
4 T. olive oil  
4 anchovies – boquerones suggested  
4-6 cloves garlic, diced  
Touch of red pepper flakes, optional  
52 oz. (3 440 g. cans) San Marzano tomatoes, crushed or 2 boxes Pomi crushed tomatoes  
8-12 oz. tuna, Spanish packed in olive oil – Ortiz is excellent  
½ c. olives, chopped – Greek or Italian green  
2 T. capers  
Coarse sea salt, freshly ground black pepper  
Italian parsley, chopped for garnish

TECHNIQUE:

1. Set large pot of water on to boil pasta.
2. Prepare tomatoes by putting in mixing bowl. Cut off any hard stem end bits and remove any lingering peel. Crush with hands (unless using Pomi, then it's ready to go).
3. In a large sauté pan, over medium heat, put in olive oil, then garlic and anchovies. Stir anchovies with a fork while cooking, about 3-4 minutes, until almost liquefied.
4. Add peppers flakes, if desired. Add tomatoes, salt and pepper. Let this sauce simmer at low heat about 5-10 minutes.
5. Put pasta in boiling water to cook.
6. Adjust seasonings in tomato sauce. Add tuna and olives. Keep on flame just enough to heat thoroughly. Add capers, taste to adjust seasonings again. Turn off heat.
7. Drain pasta and put in warmed pasta serving bowl. Put half the tuna sauce in the bottom of the bowl and gently toss to coat all the pasta with sauce. Let sit 2-3 minutes so pasta can absorb sauce. Add additional sauce—all if needed—to

# PONZI

V I N E Y A R D S

sufficiently sauce the pasta without drowning it. If there is leftover sauce, serve it on the table. Garnish the pasta with a good amount of freshly chopped parsley and serve immediately with Italian bread and amply filled glasses of Tavola. Toast a sincere “Salute” to all gathered at your table to share this humble, hearty, healthful... fast, colorful, delicious and almost economical meal. A big green salad could follow.

*NOTE – On cheese: Fish and cheese just aren’t that compatible. In Italy I was once scolded by the waiter for an apparently disgusting request to grate cheese over a fish sauce! Apparently it’s akin to ordering cappuccino in—what!—the afternoon when one only drinks espresso. The world however, changes... to your taste: please, cheese or cappuccino as you like.*

*NOTE – On tuna: Again to your taste, more or less. The sauce will still be flavorful.*

*NOTE – On anchovies: This small amount, integrated into almost a paste with the garlic, will not be at all “fishy”, but produce a deep, rich base to the sauce.*