



## **Easy 'n Elegant Pappardelle Pasta Supper**

*Circles of Italian flavor for small dinner party*

- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, peeled, chopped
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups fine chopped fresh mushrooms
- 3/4-pound lean ground beef
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon salt; 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 (14.5 oz.) can low salt crushed tomatoes
- 1 (14.5 oz.) can low salt Italian diced tomatoes
- 1 (5.5 ounce) can spicy vegetable juice
- 1-pound snap peas, stems trimmed
- 1 to 1-1/2 cups garlic butter croutons
- 4 cups golden egg pappardelle noodles, cooked al dente

2 Tablespoons (each) butter; olive oil  
3 to 4 Tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

**Garnish:** Ground red pepper or paprika; grated Parmesan cheese;  
Fresh basil sprig

**Prepare Blended Beef:** In 10-inch large skillet, heat oil; add onion, cooking to light brown. Add minced garlic; sauté for 1 minute; stir in chopped mushrooms; cook to soften, about 10 minutes over medium heat. Add ground meat, breaking into small pieces; cook over medium heat for 10 minutes. Stir in Italian seasoning, fennel seeds, salt, and black pepper. Cook a few minutes to blend in seasoning.

**Cook Tomato Meat Sauce:** Add crushed tomatoes, diced tomatoes, and vegetable juice; bring to a boil; cook over medium heat, reducing liquid, about 15 to 20 minutes to thicken tomato sauce.

**Cook and Prepare Snap Peas:** Meanwhile in a large pot of boiling water; cook snap peas for about 3 minutes and bright green color. Drain water; rinse with cold water; pat off excess water. Lay snap peas around edge of serving dish all going the same direction. Place croutons spread out in center of serving plate.

**Cook and Prepare Pappardelle Noodles:** Meanwhile in a large pot of boiling water; cook noodles for about 3 minutes until al dente tender. Drain water; place noodles in large bowl; stir in butter, olive oil, and grated Parmesan cheese.

**To Serve:** Spoon Italian meat sauce in center portion of serving plate over the croutons; spoon egg noodles in a circle around the meat. Sprinkle noodles lightly with ground red pepper or paprika; garnish lightly with grated Parmesan cheese and add a fresh basil sprig. Serve warm.  
Serves: 4 to 6

**Cook's Note:** True Italian meat sauce takes hours to cook. This meat sauce tastes rich but is easy to make. Let the meat sauce slowly cook stirring occasionally. The peas and the noodles both cook in 3 minutes, which will leave you enough time to arrange the peas on the platter for an impressive look. Spoon the meat sauce over the center of platter right before serving, circle with noodles and serve.

**About the Recipe:** This dish looks like it took hours to make, but it was finished in an hour. The Italian sauce is blended with mushrooms, adding a delicious umami flavor. The croutons soften but remain a little crisp, providing that extra garlic crunch along with snappy peas. Tender pasta noodles dressed with light buttery Parmesan cheese is a winning combination.