

Drunken Cacio E Pepe

INGREDIENTS

- 8** garlic cloves
- 3 OZ** Pecorino Romano and/or Parmigiano Reggiano, plus more for serving
- 8 TBSP** (1 stick) unsalted butter
 - Kosher salt
- 2 TBSP** black peppercorns
 - 1** (750 ml) bottle full-bodied red wine, such as zinfandel or cabernet
- 1 TBSP** extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 LB** spaghetti

4 SERVINGS

- 1** Put a large pot of water on the heat to boil. Salt it generously. Thinly slice 8 garlic cloves.
- 2** Coarsely grind enough black peppercorns to measure a scant 2 tablespoons. The grind should be very large! If your pepper mill doesn't make a large grind, use a mortar and pestle or resealable plastic bag and crush them with the bottom of a heavy skillet.
- 3** If it's not already, finely grate 3 ounces Pecorino Romano
- 4** Cube 6 tablespoons unsalted butter. Keep chilled in the fridge.
- 5** Crack open 1 (750 ml) bottle full-bodied red wine.
- 6** In a large Dutch oven, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons butter and a glug of olive oil over medium-high heat (the olive oil raises the smoking point of the butter, allowing you to cook over medium heat without burning it). Add the sliced garlic and ground peppercorns, season with salt, and cook, stirring over medium heat until the garlic is softened but not browned, 1 to 2 minutes.
- 7** Pour the whole bottle of wine into the pot, raise the heat to high, and bring to a boil. Cook until the liquid reduces to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup, 16 to 20 minutes.
- 8** Once the wine has been reducing for 10 minutes or so, add 1 pound spaghetti to the pot of building water. Give it a stir and cook until very al dente, 2 to 3 minutes less than the package directions. Scoop out a cup or so of the pasta water and drain the pasta.
- 9** Once the wine has adequately reduced, reduce the heat to low and add the cold cubed butter, a few pieces at a time. Shake the pot back and forth, while stirring, to emulsion the butter and wine into a silky homogeneous sauce.
- 10** Add the drained pasta to the pot. Using a pair of tongs, coat the noodles in the sauce. And here comes the cacio: add the 3 ounces grated cheese, along with a big splash of the reserved pasta water. Continue stirring and coating the pasta with the sauce, adding more of the reserved pasta water, a splash at a time, until a loose, silky sauce is formed (you may not use all the pasta water). Give a final seasoning of salt.
- 11** Divide the pasta among serving bowls and eat immediately, with more grated cheese on top.