

Broken pasta and lentil soup

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Broken pasta and lentil soup

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The art of classic Italian cooking is in keeping things simple and allowing each element of a dish to shine on the plate.

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 3 golden shallots or 1 medium onion, roughly chopped
- 1 celery stick, thinly sliced
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 2 cm thick slice of [pancetta](#) or speck, cut into cubes
- 1 cup (220 g) puy [lentils](#), rinsed under cold water
- 1 piece pecorino or parmigiano rind
- 1-2 sprigs thyme, plus extra leave to garnish
- 3 cups (750 ml) vegetable or chicken stock, plus extra if needed
- Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper
- 170 g broken pasta (or use a small pasta such as ditalini or risoni)
- 2-3 cups (500-750 ml boiling water
- Hot [chillies](#), to serve (optional)

Method

Broken pasta and lentil soup

Heat the olive oil in a medium heavy-based saucepan over medium heat and cook the shallot or onion, celery and carrot for 3–4 minutes or until softened but not coloured.

Stir in the pancetta or speck and cook for 2–3 minutes over medium heat, then add the lentils, cheese rind, thyme, stock and a pinch of salt and simmer over low-medium heat for 25–30 minutes or until the lentils are almost cooked through.

Add the pasta and enough boiling water to cover the pasta and lentils and cook for 5–6 minutes or until the pasta is al dente and the lentils are cooked through. You will notice that the natural starch in the pasta acts as a thickener – add a little more water or stock if you prefer a more liquid soup. Remove the cheese rind, then season to taste with salt and pepper.

Ladle the soup into bowls and finish with a scattering of thyme leaves and a drizzle of olive oil. Serve with hot chillies if you fancy the Nonno Domenico experience!

Recipe and images by [Silvia Colloca](#)

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