the recipe-book

pasta by SIRMAN

The Sirman Pasta Lab

Pasta extrusion guide

This small guide about extruded pasta is a product of the professional experience of SIRMAN's chefs who are sharing their knowledge in this book. Packed with valuable information, this book will provide you with step-by-step directions, making sure that you achieve the best results from your fresh extruded pasta.

Whether you are a seasoned pasta maker or coming to this for the very first time, we will be giving you some pointers that will not only allow you to perfect your traditional fresh pasta technique, but also help you to make up some wonderful recipes of your own.

So, be sure to read this guide attentively and keep it close at hand, ready for consultation whenever you need. It will clear up any doubts that you might have.

For the sake of convenience, I have put the recipes at the beginning so you don't need to waste time looking for them when you need them.

The dough-preparation recipes refer to the maximum quantities for the bowl.

I have included a link below where you can download a guidance chart on how to calculate the amount of flour and liquid needed according to the machine used

N.B.: SIRPASTA and CONCERTO contain 4,200 g of dough at the most.
SINFONIA contains a maximum amount of 2,520 g of dough.
ORCHESTRA contains a maximum amount of 9,800 g of dough

Important note!
These are the approximate kneading times:
7 -10 minutes for CONCERTO
12-15 minutes for SIRPASTA and ORCHESTRA

As far as eggs are concerned:
egg = whole hen's egg
white = only the transparent part of a hen's egg
yolk = only the yellow centre of a hen's egg

Egg pasta

(classic recipe)

INGREDIENTS:

2 kg of durum-wheat semolina
1 kg white Italian “00” flour
1.2 kg eggs

Pasta only egg whites + water

INGREDIENTS:

1.6 kg of durum-wheat semolina
0.8 kg white Italian “00” flour
0.3 kg egg whites
0.5 kg warm water

Egg pasta with extra water

(a stretchier dough suitable for stuffed pasta too)

INGREDIENTS:

1.6 kg of durum-wheat semolina
1.4 kg white Italian “00” flour
0.6 kg eggs
0.4 kg water

Coloured pasta

INGREDIENTS:

1.8 kg of S2 durum-wheat semolina
0.8 kg white Italian “00” flour
1.2 kg eggs
0.4 kg natural colourant in powder form
(it might have a greater moisture content)

Egg-yolk pasta for Piedmontese Tajarin

INGREDIENTS:

1.7 kg white Italian “00” flour
0.8 kg semolina flour
1.5 kg egg yolks
0.09 kg water

Mix the flours together in the bowl, then add first the egg and then gradually the water.

Pizzoccheri-type pasta

(classic recipe)

INGREDIENTS:

2 kg white Italian “00” flour
1 kg buckwheat flour
0.9 kg water

Turn the flours into the bowl and wait until they mixed thoroughly.
Add the water slowly.

Chestnut flour pasta

(classic recipe)

INGREDIENTS:

2 kg S2 semolina
0.5 kg Italian "00" flour
0.5 kg chestnut flour
0.9 kg water
Turn the flours into the bowl and wait until they mixed thoroughly.
Add the water slowly.

Egg pasta for ravioli 1

INGREDIENTS:

2 kg S2 semolina
1 kg Italian "00" flour
0.8 kg eggs at room temperature
0.4 kg warm water
50 g oil or vinegar (optional to be substituted for an equal amount of water)
The more water takes the place of the egg, the stretchier the pasta sheet will be.
If you want the dough to be even stretchier, leave it to stand for at least 5 hours.

Egg-yolk pasta for ravioli 2

INGREDIENTS:

2 kg S2 semolina
1 kg Italian "00" flour
0.4 kg egg yolks at room temperature
0.7 kg warm water
50 g oil or vinegar (optional to be substituted for an equal amount of water)

Water-based pasta 1

(mixed semolina flours)

INGREDIENTS:

2 kg S2 semolina
1 kg remilled semolina
0.9 / 1 kg water

Water-based pasta 2

(S2 semolina)

INGREDIENTS:

3 kg of S2 durum-wheat semolina
0.9 / 1 kg water

Water-based pasta 3

(classic recipe)

INGREDIENTS:

Basic dough for fresh or dried pasta
2 kg S2 semolina
1 kg Italian "00" flour
0.9 / 1 kg water

Green water-based pasta

(classic recipe)

INGREDIENTS:

2 kg S2 semolina
1 kg Italian "00" flour
0.4 kg spinach blanched in boiling water and then allowed to cool
0.6 kg water
Put the spinach in a jug and add sufficient water to reach 1 kg of finished product, then blend thoroughly. Instead of spinach, you could use beetroot or something else.

Green egg-based pasta

(classic recipe)

INGREDIENTS:

2 kg S2 semolina
1 kg Italian "00" flour
0.4 kg spinach blanched in boiling water and then allowed to cool
0.6 kg eggs
Put the spinach in a jug and add sufficient eggs to reach 1 kg of finished product, then blend thoroughly. Instead of spinach, you could use beetroot or something else.

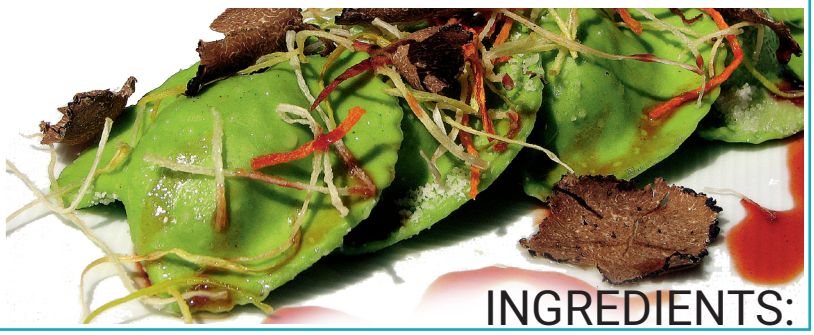
Gluten-free dough with egg

Mixture of gluten-free flour (5 stagioni - Le selezioni di Fabio - others)

INGREDIENTS:

1.5 kg fresh pasta mixture
0.9 kg pasteurised eggs (depending on the mixture)
You will obtain a dough that seems to be dry and quite floury compared to ordinary gluten flours, but it is perfect for extruded pasta despite its appearance. Try squeezing it in your hand to feel its consistency.

Gluten-free vegan pasta



INGREDIENTS:

3 kg pulse flour (peas, lentils, chickpeas)
60 g Xanthan gum
300- 350 g water

Mix the Xanthan gum and the flours together thoroughly. Then, turn the mixture into the bowl and slowly add the water.
You should obtain a texture that is like coffee beans.
It will need at least 10 minutes' kneading.

Don't forget that the amount of liquid required can vary so be extremely cautious when pouring in the last 150 g of liquid. You may need more or less than indicated.

Processings steps

Steps to be followed for extruded pasta for
SIRPASTA XP, SIRPASTA MAXI, CONCERTO, SINFONIA and ORCHESTRA

1.Choosing the right type of flour dry mixture or other dry ingredients.
There are many different ways to make pasta: either a traditional mixture of water or egg + flour, or one of those specialised and sophisticated blends that chefs so love to experiment with (using ancient grains or working in other kinds of ingredients of a completely different nature). Then of course you can also make gluten-free pasta.

There must be a precise reason for choosing a flour. You cannot just use any old one; each grain size will produce different results.
By way of guidance, here is some information about the flours available on the market.

Wheat flours (grasses), pseudocereals, pulses or the such like
DURUM WHEAT (Tritucum durum): ordinary durum-wheat semolina, s1 type, S2 type, and remilled (which we do not recommend due to its inferior quality)

We advise using s1 semolina (very coarse) or S2 (coarse) to obtain pasta with a rougher surface.

COMMON WHEAT (Triticum aestivum) wholemeal (100%), type 1 (85%), type 2 (80%), type "0" (72%), type "00" (50%), type "000"

EINKORN or cultivated einkorn (Triticum monococcum);

EMMER WHEAT or hulled wheat (Triticum dicoccum);

DINKEL WHEAT or just spelt (Triticum spelta).

RICE, BARLEY, OATS, AMARANTH, TEFF, SORGUM, RYE, KAMUT, HEMP, YELLOW/RED LENTILS, LUPIN SEEDS, PURPLE BEANS, MAIZE, COMMON MILLET, PEAS, TAPIOCA, CHESTNUTS, BUCKWHEAT,
MIXTURE OF GLUTEN-FREE FLOURS...it is extremely important that none of the flours has lumps or an uneven texture with larger particles, such as bran.
It is often sufficient to add a little xanthan to a gluten-free flour mix to make it easier to knead.

2. Prevalent ingredients
This are the SUBSTANCES that provide the pasta with certain characteristics, like flavour and colour.

VEGETABLE FLOURS: PUMPKIN, SPINACH, CHARDS, BEETROOT, CARROTS, BITTER COCOA, CHESTNUTS, CURCUMA, ANISEED, FRESH OR DRIED AROMATIC HERBS or CUTTLEFISH INK. Quantities for the dough must be measured with care to get it right.
You can use colourants in a powder form in the APPROXIMATE amount of 10%. These can be purchased from pasta wholesalers. Included in this category are vegetable purées that we will be looking at in the WATER CONTENT section.

3. Water content
The average water content of dough is between 30% and 40%, but this varies according to the type of flour and liquid used. I remember a customer who produced their own flour and the water content was around about 28-29%.

Water content for flour does not necessarily have to come from plain water, it can also be added through the water contained in other foodstuffs.
It could come from whole eggs, yolks, egg whites, a wine reduction, cow's milk or sheep's milk, yoghurt, plant milk, cooking water from octopus, shellfish, mussels, chickpeas, beans, wild herbs, chicory or fish stock, broth, creamed or puréed vegetables (spinach, pumpkin, tomato, purple carrot, beans, chickpeas, potatoes, etc.).
Make sure that you strain the liquid properly to make sure that nothing lodges in the die.

The main thing is to gauge the right amount of liquid to add because vegetable purées and eggs are not made up of 100% water. This means that weight for weight, they have less water content than plain water. The strength of the flour can also lead to an increased capacity to absorb water.
The liquid must be at room temperature and never cold or straight from the fridge.

Tip: you could use SIRMAN's EKTOR juicer to make scented liquid bases tinged with pure colour.

3.1 Gluten elasticity improvement agents

OIL: this has a dehydrating effect on the gluten network which makes the dough softer and more malleable. In short, if you add a little oil to the dough, it will be much stretchier and more resilient during the rolling out and shaping phase.

However, if you add oil to the dough, you'll have to reduce the water content (liquids or egg). What is more, ingredients tend to meld better when oil is added which not only makes for an attractive sheen, but also a more even consistency. The oil also adds flavour and aroma. The right dose is between 0.1 and 0.2% per kg of flour.

SALT: many people advise against using salt because it can mar the pasta with white stains. It would be a good idea to dissolve it in the liquid before you fold in the flour. Adding salt to dough slows down the activity of all enzymes in general, but particularly the activity of proteases which have a softening effect. So, when you add salt to the dough, it will be less sticky and stretchier. Salt has a positive action on gluten because it strengthens the gluten network.

VINEGAR: a small amount of vinegar also helps gluten to develop because it acts on the glutenin, boosting the extendibility of the pasta, slowing down the browning of egg pasta and helping to preserve the original colour for a longer time (obviously if used in the right proportions).

4. Kneading and shaping

Once the flours have been weighed and sifted (if necessary), they are placed inside the machine which is then switched on. If several flours are being used, the machine can even be left on for 1 minute so that the dry ingredients are properly and evenly combined by the moving blades for Concerto, Sinfonia and Orchestra, and by the screw (also known as: Archimedes' screw) for Sirpasta.

This is when you need to add the liquid. To do so use the shower attachment which allows for better distribution over the flours.

Although it is not strictly necessary, it would be advisable to add the liquid gradually in about 4 different stages. Kneading is a slow and constant pressing and working of the pasta inside the bowl (the kneading attachment) so that the flours absorb the moisture and the mixing blades shape the dough. At the end of this phase, the mixture should have a texture similar to couscous, pearl barley and coffee beans.

For Sirpasta, my advice is to place a funnel in the centre of the lid above the hole to facilitate operations.

When you need to add puréed vegetables (like spinach), it might not be possible to get them through the shower attachment so I suggest taking the lid off and pouring them straight onto the flour (but in 4-6 stages).
Flours are all different so your dough might not be stretchy and resilient. We recommend doing the kneading the day before and leaving the dough to rest in the fridge inside the kneading bowl so that the gluten network has time to form properly. Take the dough out of the fridge 1 hour before using it. Keep it covered to stop it coming into contact with the air.

Once you have got the hang of the recipe for extruded pasta and found the right balance between the flour and the water/egg mixture, the dough can also be kneaded in the planetary mixer with the hook; and on some machines with a spatula or flat whisk.
This has the advantage of speed so you can work constantly without having to stop the machine for 10 minutes pauses for the kneading.
My advice is this: pour half the liquid on the flour mixture and start working it in slowly. Otherwise, you'll end up with a cloud of powder. Then, add the other half, increasing the speed when you see that the powder has stopped rising up. This means that the liquid has soaked up all the flour.
It is easier to knead on a higher speed and the dough is smoother with a more even consistency.
As soon as the dough is ready, put it into the pasta-extrusion bowl when it is half full with the previous batch.
You will raise efficiency and performance levels by not waiting for the bowl to become empty.

5. Extrusion or drawing the dough
We now have a polyethylene plastic mould on the machine, **this mould must be fitted onto the machine for the entire preparatory stage right up to the moment of the first extrusion. It serves to clean the extrusion duct of the screw** or spiral attachment which will most probably have residual dry flour that could block the holes of the bronze die, causing substantial damage.

It should be said that: The “bronze die” is a plate made from bronze, a special alloy that gives the dough a rough porous surface that will absorb the sauce with greater ease.
In the case of a used die, it will have been kept in some water, so it should be rinsed off and allowed to stand in hot water (about 60°C) for a few minutes. The same principle applies to new dies as well. The die should not be cold because the warmth will help to increase the porosity and even texture of the pasta.

The die will warm up on its own anyway even if we don’t put it in hot warm, but it will take time and be wasteful.

So, we need to heat up the die in water while the machine is kneading so as to save ourselves time.

So, to sum up, at this stage we must:

1. Press the stop button, and then the start button on SINFONIA, CONCERTO and ORCHESTRA, while on SIRPASTA all that needs to be done is to open the door (from Close to Open, therefore from right to left when facing the machine).
2. Wait for the grains of pasta to start coming out until they form cords. When these strands are about 10 cm long, stop the machine
3. Unscrew the die ring nut, remove the plastic mould (called a “DIE PROTECTOR”) and replace it with a bronze die that you have first heated up at 50-60°C. Then, fit the ring nut back on.
4. Start the machine up again, allow some of the dough to push through until the inside of the die is cleaned by the residual dough. You might want to put a piece of paper in front of the die because, being wet, it might spray you.
5. Now, decide whether to add the pasta cutter (in the event of short pasta) or to keep on extruding long pasta.

We have a variety of solutions for **long pasta** production, each suitable for achieving a particular final result.
- For instance, if you do à la carte work, it is convenient to make single portions. But it is one thing to make 120 g of tagliatelle in 2 skeins and quite another to create a single skein because obviously the strips would be much too long for the diners to eat. My advice is to settle on a length (for instance 35 cm) and then weigh out the quantity of pasta in order to standardise the portions properly. Once you have established the right length which will match the weight you want, you will be able to do away with the scales. All you will need to do is always cut the pasta to that length
- Another solution that will be perfect for those in the banqueting sector is to allow the tagliatelle to come out and pile up on their own. Then, every now and again, you need to do this: take hold of the end of the skein and wind it like a rope or cable

around the arm in a succession of circles. Put these hoops down on the counter and cut the two ends with a suitable knife.
- The portions can also be laid lengthwise rather than as a skein.

You can also use an **adjustable pasta-sheet** die which will come in very handy for making sheets of exactly the right thickness.
The minimum thickness for all the machines is about 0.55 mm up, whereas the maximum thickness for Sinfonia, Concerto and Sirpasta is about 2/2.5 mm but approximately 2.5/3 mm for Orchestra.

This enables us to experiment and make all sorts of variations on a theme: cannelloni, lasagna, Prague roses, or just a plain sheet of pasta that can be used in front of the customer to make hand-cut tagliatelle, tagliolini or pappardelle.
There are two possible methods that we can adopt for filled pasta such as lasagna or cannelloni:
- we can pasteurise the sheet of pasta with steam and then stuff our lasagna or cannelloni with soft moist fillings. It will keep for a few days.
- otherwise, you can create a pasta bake (filled again with soft and moist ingredients) that you will pre-cook in steam, stand to cool and then store in the fridge.

It can then be cooked in the usual way when you are ready.

6. Cleaning
Sirpasta can be taken fully apart, which makes it easy to clean even the smallest crevices.

As far as the other machines are concerned, we have two options. Either we can clean them as soon as we've finished, or we can wait until the next pasta-making session because by that stage the old pasta will be dry and easier to detach.
We recommend using a short brush with stiff plastic bristles to reach the farthest corners, as well as another longer brush to dust the corners inside the mouth and at the back of the spindle motor. In my opinion, a thin rod (like Chinese chopsticks) or a bottle brush are also a good idea.

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT NOTE!
Once you have finished with the dies, they should always be left soaking in water that you have dissolved some vinegar in. Change the solution now and again. When you are ready to use the dies again, rinse them thoroughly and soak them in hot water (50°C) before starting to extrude the pasta.

Fillings for stuffed pasta
The most popular filling bases used to stuff ravioli are:
RICOTTA or **SOFT CHEESE BASE**: excess liquid must be drained off the ricotta first, otherwise you can add fibres, potato flakes or modified starches to absorb the extra water.
POTATO BASE: this can be made using either fresh or dried potatoes.
BÉCHAMEL BASE: this requires a very thick béchamel sauce. Any kind of stuffing will work, as long as it has a soft consistency and is not too coarse.

Eggs are not the best binder for this type of filling otherwise you will end up with a "meatloaf" effect.

If you want to use a vegetable stuffing, make sure that everything is finely chopped. The same goes for meat and fish. I suggest using a small quantity of a hygroscopic agent (such as starch, fibre, Crystal Mais corn starch or neutral starch for ice-cre-ams) to absorb any residual moisture.

Another suggestion is to make a **sweet filling** for calcioni or raviolacci, perhaps using an aniseed-scented or cocoa-flavoured dough. It will make excellent fritters.
RAW-FISH OR RAW-MEAT BASE: another option is to make a raw-meat or raw-fish filling. It is fundamental for the filling to slide effortlessly through the funnel so the fish/meat should be minced finely and have an even texture; it should also be soft with a sufficient amount of fat (like sausage or salmon); I usually adjust the degree of softness to suit my chosen fillings using potato purée, water, ricotta/mascarpo-ne, béchamel or roast-meat juices.
COOKED-MEAT BASE: The meat filling of an agnolotto (parcel of filled pasta) or a casoncello (half-moon shaped parcels of pasta) is a classic choice. The cooked mincemeat mixture used for classic ravioli is usually too dry, so the filling needs adjusting to make it soft and moist. I generally add a little béchamel, but it is up to you.

N.B.: It is best to plan your work out ahead of time when you make ravioli on the ravioli maker. For instance, you might want to make extruded pasta as well, thus using up the scraps left from the ravioli for something else rather than feeding them back into the machine. This will ensure that the ravioli dough is always fresh and soft without a crumbly texture that might lead to breakage; it will also ensure that the ravioli edges seal properly. As the scraps fall to the counter, pick them up and **store them in a plastic bag** to make sure that they don't dry out.

When you've finished making the ravioli, you can carry on to use up the left-over scraps. **Chop the remnants up coarsely**, then place them in the bowl with a little flour. You'll soon get the hang of how much needs adding. It is usually of little relevance if the dough contains traces of filling. After 5-7 minutes, it should have a crumbly texture. The main thing is that the **flour is mixed in well**.
Now you can go on to the extruding process.

The ideal solution for these remnants would be a big cutter (or better still a planetary mixer). This speeds the whole process up.

7. How to preserve pasta
MODE 1
REFRIGERATION: This is the traditional storage method. Once the pasta has been extruded, lay it on perforated trays for a while before storing it inside the fridge. Like this, pasta will keep for 2/3 days after which it will start to spoil (small spots will mar the surface) due to the action of the proteins and albumin.
If you use pasteurised eggs instead of fresh eggs, you will be able to keep the pasta for 5/6 days without any significant loss in quality.

MODE 2
DEEP-FREEZING: Once the pasta has been dried, it can be shock-frozen below zero which means that it will retain its properties well for 2 months (even longer if pasteurised eggs have been used).
MODE 3
PASTEURISATION: Pasta can be pasteurised by following these simple steps. As soon as the pasta is ready, place it on perforated trays in the oven with saturated steam between **80°C and 90°C for about 2-6 minutes**; then shock-freeze it, bringing the core temperature down to 2/3° C. At this point, it can be kept in the fridge for 1 week.

It could be frozen too which will have a very positive effect. It especially happens with filled pasta that the parcels tend to burst when frozen because the water contained in the stuffing swells. On the other hand, pasteurised pasta tends to become stretchier and therefore sturdier

It is not a good idea to use an egg binder for filled pasta because it does not give the best texture.

DRYNG: We make fresh-pasta machines. They are not meant for dry pasta - which is not made in restaurants anyhow. Stage one of pasta drying is known as "incartamento" in Italian (literally "wrapping"). This is when it dries on the surface, as it emerges from the die or if left out for a few minutes.
Stage two (known in Italian as "rinvenimento" - literally "tempering") when the pasta is left uncovered in a cool place for about 12 hours so that the moisture inside is also released. Last but not least, we have the true drying process when the pasta is exposed to air or to artificial hot-air ventilation (for a question of quality, the temperature should be below 60°C although the process will take longer like this).

8. Pasta cooking

Omitting salt in the pasta pan is a big no-no for Italians, yet unfortunately it happens abroad.
So, let's go back to the basics:
How much water do you need to cook pasta?
When cooking pasta, you should calculate 1 litre of water for each 100 g of pasta and roughly 10 g of salt for each litre of water.
Clearly, these quantities are just indicative because there are several different factors at play: the kind of salt, the kind of pasta, the saltiness of the sauce and obviously the taste buds of the diner.
So, suffice it to say that an ideal dosage goes from a minimum of 7 g to a maximum of 14 g per LITRE..

DIES

Our catalogue (and therefore available in our depot) contains 22 pasta dies plus another 43 available upon advance order. We can also make a lot more, including special ones. For instance, alphabet pasta dies with A-B-C, cute animal shapes or Christmas-themed dies.

For instance, if we have the 3.5 mm Tagliolino die in stock because it is one of our most popular products, other sizes such as 2.5 and 1.8 mm can be ordered too. This applies to many other shapes and sizes, like round or square spaghetti, grooved macaroni, tagliatelle, Sardinian gnocchetti, fusilli and many more.

Sheet pasta: the sheet pasta die should be used with a plate that is 173 mm wide for all models, except for Orchestra which has a width of 284 mm.
Be aware that a 173-mm wide sheet plus one other half will be an exact fit for a 1/1 Gastronorm tray.

Classification of non-Italian flours as compared to Italian flours

Denominazione Italia	USA	Germania	Francia	Grecia
Farina di grano tenero tipo 00 (Soft-wheat flour type 00)	Pastry flour	405	40	50
Farina di grano tenero tipo 0 (Soft-wheat flour type 0)	All pourpose flour	550	55	70
Farina di grano tenero tipo 1 (Soft-wheat flour type 1)	High gluten flour	812	80	
Farina di grano tenero tipo 2 (Soft-wheat flour type 2)	First clear flour	1050	110	
Farina di grano tenero tipo Integrale (Soft-wheat flour wholemeal type)	White whole wheat	1600	150	olikis

Frequently asked questions

F.A.Qs.
- Can I make gluten-free dough?
- The pasta won't come out properly
- I can't put the cutter on the machine or it doesn't cut properly
- The sheet of pasta is not even and shreds constantly, especially when I make it really thin
- The ravioli sheet shreds
- The pasta die heats up
- Where should I store the pasta dies?
- Which is better between CONCERTO or SIRPASTA?
- Can I make gnocchi?
- Can I keep the dough in the machine when it is switched off? If so, how long for?
- Can I re-use unused pasta scraps (like remnants from ravioli or other pasta)?

1. Can I make gluten-free dough?
Our machines are definitely able to make a wide range of pasta doughs. Obviously recipes must be experimented with and standardised. Ingredients must be weighed carefully and any changes (even differences of few grammes) must be recorded

2. The pasta isn't coming out properly
It must be said that if all the procedures are followed properly, this simply can't happen. Make sure that you ALWAYS use the white plastic "DIE PROTECTOR" mould each time:
- you start a new extrusion cycle
- you add flour to the dough because it is too wet, when the texture is too coarse (with pieces as big as chickpeas or olives) or when the mixture all clumps together
- you add a preliminary dough made in the planetary mixer or with the cutter which contains loose flour (even in tiny amounts)

Always make sure that the bronze dies are left to soak in water otherwise the remnants of pasta inside will dry up, partially or completely obstructing the fresh dough and causing the machine to overheat (which will cook the dough inside the die head).
There may be times when we are not completely concentrated (or we get constantly disturbed during the vital ingredient-weighing phase) and even 50 g of liquid (water, egg or something else) one way or the other can completely change the consistency of the dough. So, the moral is stay focused on the task and be accurate. Check the tare weight, always weigh the eggs and always sieve the flour (because it might be lumpy, especially in the case of wholemeal flour).
Before you work with a new dough, always check that the machine is scrupulously clean. Every single bit of old dough (even if you only used the machine a few hours previously) will have dried and risks blocking the die holes, producing inferior results.

3. I can't put the cutter on the machine or it doesn't cut properly

1 - First of all, ensure that the knife blade is facing outwards so that once the cutter is fitted, the blade will scrape the surface of the die.

2 - Once the knife is fitted on, it must be turned (wear a pair of gloves) until you reach the point at which you can push it as if it were a buffer. Once you've identified the spot, hold it in that position and fit the cutter onto the machine. This buffer will ensure that the blade is always snugly positioned against the die surface.

3 - If you still can't fit on the cutter after point 2, there are two more options:

A - the mounts that hold the cutter in place might be the wrong ones. Get in touch with your local supplier and replace them with the right ones.

B - the shaft that holds the knife is fixed on incorrectly. All you need is an Allen wrench (Allen key or hex key, in other words an L-shaped hexagonal bar).

4. The sheet of pasta is not even and shreds constantly, especially when I make it really thin

This is almost definitely because the bowl contains some residue from previous dough-making sessions.
Or because the flour is not sifted and contains impurities.
The pasta die is dry because it hasn't been soaked in water.
The pasta die is dented from a fall.

5. The ravioli sheet shreds

As above, this is almost definitely because the bowl contains some residue from previous dough-making sessions.
Or because the flour is not sifted and contains impurities.
The pasta die is dry because it hasn't been soaked in water.
The pasta die is dented from a fall.

6. The pasta die heats up

There is nothing wrong about the extruded pasta heating up because the screw drives the pieces of pasta towards the bronze die and this friction generates heat. As long as it doesn't become too hot, there is nothing to worry about. Actually, you will notice that when the pasta die is first put on, the first pasta that comes out (after you have got rid of the residual pasta from the previous session) has an uneven consistency and can looks ragged along the outer edges. After a few minutes of extrusion, the pasta improves. It has smoother edges and the porosity is more uniform. This is why we recommend soaking the pasta die in hot water for 5 minutes prior to use.

7. Where should I store the pasta dies?
Most people leave them to soak in a container filled with water. For convenience's sake you could leave the container under the sink and change the water every day. Otherwise, cover the container and put it in the fridge, changing the water every 4-5 days.
If you don't intend to use the pasta dies for a while, wash them thoroughly, making sure that you get rid of all traces of residual pasta. Otherwise you could vacuum pack them and store them in the freezer.

8. Which is better between CONCERTO or SIRPASTA?
The Concerto pasta machine has a traditional design and works like most pasta-extruding machines; basically, there is a bowl fitted with blades that move to mix the dough. Concerto has got larger blades, meaning that it is quicker and more efficient than Sirpasta for this particular stage. So, it is quick and easy to use. But cleaning operations will take you a little longer. On the other hand, Sirpasta has a design that is based on industrial machinery: the blades have disappeared (in a certain sense, the blades press down on the dough, creating friction and drag. This creates heat and a greater gluten network). In Sirpasta, the blades are replaced by a spiral with a rotating circular upwards motion, lifting up the dough and kneading it gently without any danger of overheating. The screw that pushes the dough is shorter, so it generates less heat. Ultimately, the temperature is about 7°C lower on the extruded pasta compared to Concerto and other machines by our competitors. The pasta will be slightly brighter in colour and of a superior quality. However, the machine will require more care and can only be used by trained staff members.

9. Can I make gnocchi?
SYes, but they will be like the industrial gnocchi with potato flakes and the consistency will be granular.

10. Can I keep the dough in the machine when it is switched off and for how long?
Yes, the dough can be extruded a bit at a time and left to rest in the bowl. But you will have to be careful that the water content of the dough doesn't evaporate, otherwise the pasta will go dry and the deposits will clog up the die, preventing proper extrusion (as mentioned previously). So, we advise you to cover the lid with a (slightly damp) cloth or some clingfilm. How long the dough can be left inside the bowl varies according to the climate. Watch carefully to see when the dough starts to dry (even slightly) on the bowl and the blades (in the case of Concerto, Sinfonia and Orchestra).

11. Can I re-use unused pasta scraps (like remnants from ravioli or other pasta)?
Yes, you can. But you will have to put the scraps into a plastic bag or lidded container as the scraps fall off, otherwise they will get dry. Then, you had better only use the scraps for extruded pasta and not for Ravioli which require a fresh new pasta dough. We recommend that you mix the scraps in with a new dough and knead well to obtain an even consistency.

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