same machine. The only difference is in the shape. It is difficult to convince Americans of this.

"Mother of Wheat" is Basic Ingredient

One popular fallacy, is that macaroni is one thing and spaghetti is another. This is not the case. Macaroni is the name of the entire mass of dough used to make the various shapes and sizes. Spaghetti is merely one shape. It takes its name from "spaghetto" which is the Italian word for twine, because it is the shape of a piece of string. But whether its spaghetti, or margherita, which is flat and curly like the edge of a pie crust, or canneroni, which is an elbow, or lasagna, which is wide and flat, it is macaroni just the same. Macaroni is a general term just as bread is the general term for the hundred and one varieties of loaves, rolls and biscuits without which the American breakfast is incomplete.

Ideal Food Unknowingly Served

Long ago, when macaroni was to Italians just macaroni and good food, they did not take much into account its value as a body builder. Today, however, with the country gone wild on the subject of diet, calories, vitamins and food values in general, the Italian father who fed his huge family on this delicacy because it was cheap, is discovering that he was complying with the best fundamental food rules at the same time.

High Comparative Value

Where could one find a food as nutritious and good for the price as macaroni? A pound contains more calories than does a pound of round steak and a pound of macaroni costs 15 cents. To feed a family of 6, all that would be necessary would be 2 pounds of macaroni and one could use the remaining 20 cents of his half dollar for tomato paste and give a family a meal fit for the gods. Also, macaroni is a valuable food because it contains a minimum of starch. That's the point about semolina—all the starch is milled out of it.

Macaroni Not Fattening

Oh, but isn't macaroni fattening then? No, it isn't. Well, why is it that so many macaroni eaters are well—buoyant or rotund? Well, that's not the fault of the macaroni. It's the fault of the oil or the butter in which it is cooked, the mountains of Italian bread and fresh butter eaten with it, the highly seasoned appetizers which accompany it and create a craving for more and more and more. That's what makes the contours—not the macaroni itself.

A Saga of Cathay

Many, many years ago, when the peoples of the old world were recovering from the staggering economic losses occasioned by the Crusades, a great interest in exploration demanded the attention of everyone.

That was natural, for the knights and nobles who had traveled far afield to wrest the holy land from the unbeliever were an adventurous lot, and peacetime pursuits no longer satisfied their craving for danger, new hazards and fame.

The 7th and last crusade terminated in 1270 A.D. and it was just about this time that the Venetian, Marco Polo, the greatest of medieval travelers, was carrying on his explorations in far distant lands. For 17 years he visited and studied the kingdoms of Asia and opened up to accurate knowledge not only the }
region of the central Asiatic continent but also the disclosure of the existence of Japan, which he called Zapanu.

Legend has it that one day while cruising near the coast of Cathay (China) he was informed by one of his men that the ship's supply of water was running dangerously low, and would require immediate replenishment.

Accordingly he steered his ship as close to the shore as safety would permit, and sent several of his men off in a small boat in quest of fresh water. One of the sailors in the party was a Venetian named Spaghetti, and it is around this man that the legend centers. When the small boat reached the beach the 3 or 4 sailors comprising the party separated, each striking out in a different direction. They knew there would be fresh water close by, but of course did not know its exact location.

Spaghetti, in his search, soon came to a little patch of huts. He realized that water must be close but before advancing into the village his attention was drawn to a native man and woman working over a crude mixing bowl. The woman appeared to be mixing a dough of some kind, particles of which had overflowed the mixing bowl and extended to the ground.

The warm, dry air, characteristic of the country, had in a short time hardened these slender strings of dough, and had made them extremely brittle.

Spaghetti observed the ingredients used, the simple method of mixing, and it immediately occurred to him that a dry food of this kind would be a welcome addition to their ship's menu. His curiosity prompted him to approach the couple and make known his wants as best he could.

Through signs and gestures he managed to obtain a quantity of the grains used in making this strange dough, also a batch of the ready mixed dough and several strings which had dried.

So excited was he over his discovery that he completely forgot to look further for water, but hurried back to rejoin his comrades.

After relating his experience, upon returning to the ship, Spaghetti "worked" the entire quantity of dough into long slender ribbons. As they dried he broke them into shorter and more convenient lengths.

The problem of preparing the food had not been given much thought, and it was one which would have to be experimented upon.

The sticks were not palatable if eaten dry, and when cooked in fresh water were not much better. Thereupon Spaghetti conceived the idea of boiling the strips in sea water, which, as every one knows, is intensely salt.

This method seemed to produce its best result, and to bring out the rich flavor of the food.

Before returning to Venice Spaghetti learned much of this new and appetizing food. He discovered its energy producing qualities, its ability to remain fresh and wholesome for long periods of time, and noted the acclaim with which it was received by his shipmates and other Europeans to whom he introduced it.

Upon Spaghetti's arrival home the popularity of this new delicacy soon spread among the villagers, and before long a similar food made of home grown wheat was to be found on every table.

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Spaghetti for Americans

Spaghetti, macaroni, and noodles, 3 of the most nourishing cereal products, richly deserve the important place they hold in the diet of the natives of Italy, for they are easily cooked, easily digested, and easily combined with many food flavors, for they are of smooth texture and mild flavor. Those of the finest quality, made of the hard durum wheat, contain a large per cent of protein as well as carbohydrates, so in order to meet the requirements for a well-balanced meal it is necessary to add only a small amount of fat, meat, or cheese for flavor and complete the meal with a fresh green vegetable or fruit. In our country we are inclined to consider the pastes only as a macaroni until tender, then drained, a small amount at a time and rinsed well with cold water, using a colander to drain well before the sauce is added, for even for a very small amount of water will spoil the flavor of the sauce. Many very highly seasoned sauces for “Spaghetti, Italian Style,” are to be found, but it seems the best cooks in Italy prepare a very tasty sauce of tomato paste, seasoned very delicately with various herbs, meats, fish, and choice cheese, as well as garlic and onion, but these are used very sparingly and the cheese is chosen for its quality rather than quantity. Since imported Italian cheese is now available at very reasonable prices, it no longer belongs in the luxury class as little is required to make a perfect sauce. If we consider variety important in the diet the flavor is so delightfully different that it is worth a bit of extra expense and trouble.

And even though we may not care for Italian sauces for our spaghetti and foods of this type, there are so many other meat and vegetable combinations that we can easily adapt them as year-round staples.

Peppers Stuffed with Macaroni

Six large sweet peppers, 2 tablespoonfuls butter, 2 cupfuls macaroni, broken in small pieces, 1 cupful chopped meat, 2 large tomatoes, bread crumbs, salt and pepper. Remove the tops and seed of the peppers and boil for 5 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold water. Boil the macaroni in salted water until barely tender, drain and rinse. Heat 1 tablespoonful butter and heat the meat in it. Mix with the macaroni and tomatoes, chop in small pieces, season, and fill the peppers. Cover tops with crumbs, dot with 1 tablespoonful butter and bake in a moderate oven until the peppers are tender. A cupful of canned tomatoes may be substituted if fresh tomatoes are not available. This is a splendid, hot weather dish.

Scalloped Salmon and Macaroni

Two cupfuls macaroni, broken, 2 cupfuls flaked salmon, 1 pint thin white sauce, 1 cupful cracker crumbs, 2 tablespoonfuls butter or substitute. Boil macaroni until tender, drain and rinse. Arrange a layer in a baking dish, cover with flaked salmon, sprinkle with cracker crumbs and a little salt and pepper. Continue these layers until all materials are used. Pour the sauce over the top and finish with a thick layer of crumbs. Dot with butter and bake in a moderate oven for thirty minutes. An excellent emergency dish.

Macaroni with Fish Flakes

One cupful fish flakes, 1 tablespoonful olive oil, 1 teaspoonful chopped parsley, 1 cupful tomato juice, either fresh or canned, 1 cupful tomato paste, ½ pound macaroni, 1 bay leaf, 1 small onion, chopped fine, salt and pepper to taste. Heat the olive oil, add the fish flakes and brown quickly. Add the seasonings and 2 tablespoonfuls hot water. Cover closely and cook gently for 5 minutes. Add strained tomato and bay leaf. Simmer for 30 minutes, add tomato paste and cook 20 minutes longer. Cook macaroni as directed above and arrange in layers with the sauce in a hot baking dish and serve at once. Grated cheese is passed with this dish. It is not at all necessary, but is preferred by some. Some Italian recipes call for fresh fish cut in small cubes, others for salmon or tuna fish, but the prepared fish flakes are both convenient and delicious.

Macaroni Salad

Two cupfuls cooked macaroni, ½ cupful cooked carrots, cut in cubes, ½ cupful English peas, 1 teaspoonful young onions, 1 teaspoonful parsley. Chop the onion very fine and mince the parsley. Marinate the other vegetables with a tart French dressing and chill. Combine vegetables and macaroni, toss lightly with a fork; serve on lettuce with stiff mayonnaise.

Chicken and Noodles

One young hen or large fryer, 2 cupfuls thin cream, 1 egg, ½ cupful butter, or substitute, 2 tablespoonfuls flour. Prepare the chicken for roasting, salt and add dry sage to it. Add a few tablespoonfuls hot water, cover tightly, and bake in a moderate oven until very tender. Take up the chicken, stir the flour into the liquid in the pan, add the cream, which has been heated and cooked gently for 5 minutes. In the meantime boil the noodles in salted water until almost tender, drain and pile in a buttered ring mold. Beat the eggs until yolks and whites are well mixed, add to 1 cupful of the cream gravy and pour over the noodles. Set mold in a pan of hot water and bake until set in a moderate oven. Turn out on a round platter and arrange the chicken in the center. Pour the remaining gravy all over and garnish with a ring of broiled tomatoes.

Italian Spaghetti and Meat Balls

One pound ground meat, ½ pound spaghetti, 1 bay leaf, 1 clove garlic, 1 cupful bread crumbs, 1 cupful tomato paste or concentrated fresh tomatoes, 1 small onion, 2 cloves, 2 grains allspice, salt and pepper. To be very modern and waterless the ideal vegetable preparation, add 1 cupful of the cream gravy and pour over the noodles. Set mold in a pan of hot water and bake until set in a moderate oven. Turn out on a round platter and arrange the chicken in the center. Pour the remaining gravy all over and garnish with a ring of broiled tomatoes.

By SARAH GIBBS CAMBPELL

in Farm and Ranch

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