

SPAGHETTI ALLA CHITARRA WITH FRESH TOMATOES, GARLIC, CHILLI AND ROCKET

Spaghetti alla chitarra con pomodori freschi, aglio, peperoncino e rucola

SERVES 4

2 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced
 3 tablespoons olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
 2 teaspoons dried chilli flakes
 300g fresh red cherry or baby plum tomatoes, halved
 500g dried spaghetti alla chitarra
 2 large handfuls (about 80g) of rocket leaves
 Salt

When I was in Pescara – the main city in the Abruzzo region – I spent the morning with Giovanni Minicucci, the founder of the pasta shop Chitarra Antica, making spaghetti alla chitarra in the traditional way (see page 54). I then rustled up a quick fresh tomato and chilli pasta sauce – the type that every Italian makes at home. So simple yet so delicious. If you can't find spaghetti alla chitarra use any good-quality spaghetti for this dish.

1. Put the garlic in large cold frying pan. Add the oil and place the pan over a medium heat. As soon as the garlic begins to brown add the chilli flakes.
2. Add the tomatoes and cook for 1–2 minutes, stirring continuously, until slightly softened. Season with salt. Reduce the heat and simmer gently while you make the pasta.
3. Cook the pasta in a large pan of boiling, salted water until al dente. Remove the pasta from the water using tongs or a spaghetti spoon and put it directly in the pan with the tomatoes without draining. Stir thoroughly to combine. Drizzle with a little extra oil, add the rocket and toss together. Serve immediately.

