

30-Minute Weeknight Winner: Italian Beef & Velveeta Bowtie Pasta

The Ultimate Comfort: Cheesy Velveeta Bowtie Pasta with Italian Beef Marinara



TIME
40 min

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INGREDIENTS

For the Italian Beef Marinara:

121 lbs ground beef (80/20 preferred for flavor)

1 tbsp olive oil

1 small onion, finely chopped

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 (24 oz) jar marinara sauce (use a good quality brand, or my recipe for a homemade marinara)

1 tsp Italian seasoning

21 tsp crushed red pepper flakes (optional, for a little kick)

Salt & black pepper, to taste

For the Cheesy Bowtie Pasta:

12 oz bowtie (farfalle) pasta

6 oz Velveeta cheese, cubed

21 cup grated Parmesan cheese

21 cup shredded mozzarella (optional, for extra gooeyness)

41 cup reserved pasta water, if needed

Optional Garnish:

Fresh basil or parsley

Extra Parmesan

DIRECTIONS

1. Step 1: Cook the Pasta: Bring a large pot of salted water to a rolling boil.
2. Add the 12 oz of bowtie pasta and cook according to package directions until al dente. Al dente means it should still have a slight bite to it.
3. Crucially: Before draining, scoop out and reserve 41 cup of the starchy pasta water. Drain the pasta and set aside.
4. Step 2: Make the Italian Beef Marinara: Heat the olive oil in a large, deep skillet or Dutch oven over medium-high heat.
5. Add the chopped onion and sautØ until it softens and becomes translucent, about 3-4 minutes.
6. Add the minced garlic and cook for just 30 seconds until fragrant-don't let it burn!
7. Add the ground beef and cook, breaking it up with a spoon, until it is fully browned. Drain any excess grease.
8. Season the meat mixture with salt, pepper, : Italian seasoning, and the optional red pepper flakes.
9. Pour in the entire jar of marinara sauce and stir to combine. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10-12 minutes to allow the flavors to truly meld.
10. Step 3: Make It Cheesy: Keep the heat on low. Stir in the Velveeta cubes until they are completely melted and the sauce is smooth. This should only take a couple of minutes.
11. Add the grated : Parmesan and the optional shredded mozzarella, stirring until the sauce is creamy and homogenous.

12. If the sauce looks too thick, stir in a little of the reserved pasta water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until it reaches your desired creamy consistency.
13. Step 4: Combine Pasta & Sauce: Add the cooked bowtie pasta directly into the sauce in the skillet.
14. Toss everything gently but thoroughly to ensure every piece of pasta is fully coated in the cheesy, meaty marinara.
15. Step 5: Serve & Garnish: Plate the pasta immediately while it is piping hot.
16. Garnish with a sprinkle of fresh chopped basil or parsley and extra Parmesan cheese.
17. Export to : Sheets

SWAPS & NOTES

The Beef: You can easily swap the ground beef for ground turkey or ground Italian sausage (sweet or hot) for a

different flavor profile.

If using sausage, you may need less added seasoning.

The Pasta: Bowtie pasta is the star here because its shape perfectly captures the creamy sauce, but feel free to substitute

with penne, ziti, rotini, or even rigatoni.

Make it Meatless: Skip the ground beef and sauté a blend of mushrooms (cremini or portobello) instead.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Don't Overcook the Pasta: Al dente pasta holds up best in thick sauces and will continue to cook slightly when added to the hot marinara.

Overcooked, mushy pasta ruins the dish.

Reserve the Water: That starchy pasta water is liquid gold!

The starch helps emulsify the fat in the cheese sauce, creating a thicker, smoother, and more cohesive coating.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/30-minute-weeknight-winner-italian-beef-velveeta-bowtie-pasta/>