

Recipe: Whole Sonora Wheat Fettuccine or Noodles

Note: Whole Ethiopian Blue Tinge wheat can also be made into fettuccine with this recipe

Most commercial extruded Italian pasta is made with durum wheat but Italians, like the Chinese, also use common soft wheat for cut pasta and noodles.

Sonora wheat is a common soft wheat, with a light golden bran color. Stone ground whole *Sonora* wheat flour with water, makes up into simple cut-ribbon pasta, or noodles, very well indeed. However, there is an art to making quick cooking, fork-twirling cut ribbons, or fettuccine as the Italians would call them. In developing this method I received good advice and thank my long time friend Sam Huang who works with California wheat daily in the laboratory of the California Wheat Commission.

The method below owes much to Sam Huang, especially the need for an exceedingly stiff dough that finally rolls out to be beautifully soft and pliable. Pasta from a softer starting dough is not easily cut and is impossible to hang out to dry, without it stretching and falling from the drying rack. Nor is this a grainy textured whole wheat pasta, because all the flour is added at the beginning and has ample time to become thoroughly hydrated and for the bran to become very soft. The final method, which is my responsibility, includes the use of very warm water. Still I am ready to receive any comments from which to learn; I am as yet quite new to this style of pasta making. For example, when I hang this pasta to dry, it curls somewhat and makes it difficult to store in a package without breaking*. Perhaps this fault is due to my technique in folding and rolling out the dough; I have yet to find a consistent way of doing this. One amazing revelation was that this dough could be rolled to the thinness of tissue paper, and so can then be used for wraps, and for delicate pastries.

This entire process of pasta making with whole *Sonora* wheat flour can be accomplished by hand. Instead of using the food processor, the water can be incorporated by rubbing it into the flour until a dough ball can be made. The rolling can be accomplished using a very hard and smooth pastry board and a simple tapered hard wood rolling pin. The dough can be cleanly lifted free from the board and turned over, using a metal blade dough scraper. This is repeated for each successive rolling to a thinner and thinner sheet of dough. There is no need to use flour on the board, and its use would spoil the final texture, which should be smooth, pliable and not at all sticky. Nor can this dough be stretched which would be the property of kneaded dough made from hard red wheat flour. Delicacy of texture from whole *Sonora* wheat flour is achieved by the judicious rolling of a dough made up with warm water, and allowed to fully absorb the water before ever being pressed or rolled.

** Fanning the drying pasta with an electric fan, evens out the moisture level and reduces curling.*

Suggested equipment: Pasta rolling machine e.g. Marcato Atlas 150 Wellness (with non-reactive metal rollers); stocked by some cookware stores, and available on-line.

Ingredients: Whole Sonora Wheat Fettuccine Pasta or Noodles

Stone ground whole <i>Sonora</i> wheat flour	500 grams	3 cups
Water at 68°C (155°F)	275 grams	1 and 1/8 cups
Salt (optional)	5 - 10 grams	1-2 teaspoons

Method: Whole Sonora Wheat Fettuccine Pasta or Noodles

- [] Add the flour to the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade
- [] Heat water to 65-70°C (155°F). Salt if used should be dissolved in this water.
- [] Add heated water to the flour in the food processor. In just a few seconds, process the mixture into coarse granules that could be compressed into dough.
- [] By hand, press the dough into a ball as though making a snowball; kneading at this stage is unnecessary.
- [] Place the dough ball in a covered bowl. Allow the dough to rest for 1-3 hours.
Note: Refrigerate dough if you wish to keep the dough longer than 3 hours before using to make pasta, and use within 24 hours.
- [] Work on a smooth hardwood pastry board. Use a metal blade dough scraper to cut the dough ball, and work just a quarter of the dough at a time, leaving the rest in the covered bowl.
- [] Again using the metal blade dough scraper, slice the dough piece and press the pieces together with the heel of the hand. With a tapered hard wood rolling pin, form an increasingly pliable rectangle of dough with a thickness that will allow passage through the first position of the rollers in a pasta-rolling machine.
- [] Roll the dough through the increasingly narrow roller settings. Aim for a neat rectangle of dough by folding the dough piece and re-rolling several times at the lowest settings. When the dough is almost thin enough to cut into fettuccine, expect to divide it into two to four pieces and continue rolling each piece separately to achieve a dough piece with the width of the rolling machine, length approximately 25 cm (10 inches), and the desired thickness for the fettuccine.
- [] Use the cutting rollers of the pasta machine to cut each prepared sheet into fettuccine. Capture the fettuccine on a long wooden rod or spoon handle. Immediately arrange them on a drying rack, or flat on a cloth or drying tray, so that they are well separated. The fettuccine can be used immediately or allowed to dry at room temperature in a light draft on a dry day. If a food dehydrator is used to finish the drying it should be set below 140°F (60°C).

Cooking: Whole Sonora Wheat Fettuccine Pasta or Noodles

Bring a deep pan of water to boiling, salted or not according to taste. Add the pasta in either the fresh or dried form. Boil for just 4 minutes, and stir lightly with a fork to prevent sticking. Lift the pasta from the cooking water with a perforated pasta lifter, or drain through a colander. Without any further rinsing or draining, serve the pasta in a bowl or on a plate.