

## SPAGHETTI WITH CHEESY TOMATO CREAM SAUCE

4 servings

*My sister Sue taught us how to make this recipe. It saves us over and over again on Italian night when we need a quick dinner. It's a great dinner anytime! For a variation, use gnocchi (Italian dumplings) in place of the pasta.*

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 small white onion, minced
- 2 (14.5-ounce) cans diced tomatoes, undrained (see Note)
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese, plus additional for sprinkling
- 1/2 cup cream or half-and-half
- 1/4 cup low-fat ricotta cheese, about 2 ounces
- 20 fresh basil leaves, or 1/2 teaspoon dried
- 1/4 teaspoon coarse salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper (optional)
- 8 ounces uncooked spaghetti or the pasta of your choice

1. Heat the oil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook and stir the garlic and onion until you smell the aroma. Remove from the heat and add the tomatoes, 1/2 cup of the Parmesan cheese, cream, ricotta, basil, salt, black pepper, and crushed red pepper, if using. Cook over low heat until the sauce coats the back of a spoon, 10 to 15 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain.
3. Divide the pasta among four plates and spoon the sauce over each. Serve, passing the additional cheese.

Serve with a green vegetable or a salad and your favorite Italian bread.

Note: For a smoother sauce, puree the tomatoes first in a blender for a few seconds.

### CONVERSATION STARTER:

*You had a pretty good report card this time. That B+ in math is great! But I know you could do better in science. What can we do to help you with that?*

