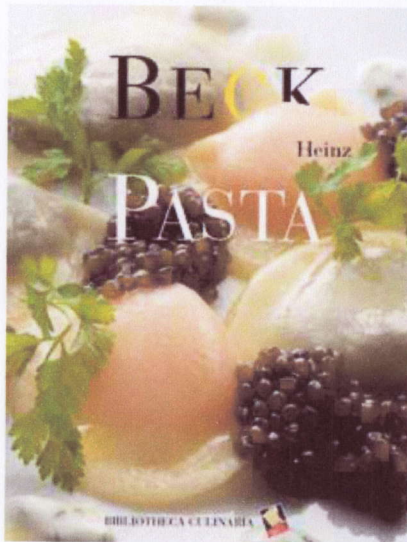


BECK ON PASTA

by Lucy Gordan



For the past five years and counting, at the end of September, Foligno, the charming and centrally-located medieval Umbrian city, has hosted the *Festival Nazionale dei Primi Piatti* (National Festival of First Courses: pasta, rice, soup, gnocchi, and spelt). This “gastro-nomic happening” offers products for sale, a four-day series (reservations necessary) of cooking lessons by world-famous chefs, tastings in Foligno’s unique medieval taverns opened especially for the occasion as well as

evening musical and cabaret entertainment.

During 2003’s Festival, Rome’s best chef Heinz Beck, winner of Best Chef Book in the world for 2002 at the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards, presented his new book, *Pasta*, of forty recipes, 15 for home-made and 25 for store-bought (Biblioteca Culinaria, 2003).

“You can’t choose where you are born,” said Bavarian Beck, “but where you live, yes. I wrote this book for Italians. I love Italy, its landscapes, its flavors and cuisine, and, of course, my wife Teresa, who is from Palermo. I’ll never leave her or Italy.”

Beck chose to write about pasta because it’s an ubiquitous Italian dish. It’s used to make *antipasti*, first courses, main dishes, and desserts. Beck’s *Pasta* includes recipes for all types of dishes, his favorite being De Cecco’s *bucatini con alici* (anchovies), inspired by Teresa.

“I recommend De Cecco,” says Beck tongue-in-cheek, “because it’s available worldwide so my readers everywhere can easily reproduce my

recipes.” In actual fact he considers it the best-quality industrial pasta:

De Cecco is the only factory in Italy to house its own flour mill and thus grind its own flour,

the water source — an underground spring — used to grind the flour and mix the dough is also inside the factory compound and therefore carefully monitored, and

the time from when the flour is ground to when it’s made into pasta is the shortest possible.

Like *Beck, Heinz, Pasta* can be ordered directly by clicking on Beck’s website: www.heinzbeck.com and then on publications. For information (available in English) on the *Festival Nazionale I Primi d’Italia*, click on www.iprimid-italia.it.

