

Frittatine alla Carbonara (Italian Carbonara Pasta Fritters)

Cooking Times & Servings

- **Prep Time:** 20 minutes (active)
 - **Cook Time:** 15 minutes
 - **Chill Time:** 5–7 hours (important for shaping)
 - **Servings:** 10 people (about 18–22 fritters, depending on cutter size)
-

Ingredients

Pasta & Mix-In

- **1.1 lb bucatini**
- **5.3 oz smoked provola**, diced or shredded
- **14 oz guanciale**, cut into small strips/cubes (you can use pancetta if needed)

Béchamel Sauce

- **7 Tbsp unsalted butter**
- **$\frac{3}{4}$ cup + 1 Tbsp all-purpose flour**
- **4 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups whole milk**
- **Fine salt**, to taste
- **Black pepper**, to taste
- **Pinch of ground nutmeg**

Carbocrema (Carbonara Cream)

- **10 large whole eggs** *or* **about 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups pasteurized egg yolks**
- **1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups Pecorino Romano, finely grated** (about 5–6 oz)
- **Freshly cracked black pepper**, to taste

Batter (Pastella)

- **2 cups water**
- **1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour**
- **Salt**, to taste
- **Black pepper**, to taste

For Frying

- **Neutral frying oil** (peanut, canola, or vegetable), enough for deep frying
 - *(Optional for extra crunch)* **Italian-style breadcrumbs** (for a double coating)
-

Instructions

1) Make the béchamel

1. In a saucepan over **low heat**, melt the butter.
2. Remove from heat and whisk in the flour until smooth (roux).
3. Slowly whisk in the milk. Return to **medium heat** and cook, whisking, until thick and glossy.
4. Season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Set aside to cool slightly.

2) Cook the guanciale

1. Add guanciale to a **nonstick skillet** (no oil needed).
2. Cook on **medium-low** until deeply golden and crisp, and the fat has rendered.
3. Turn off heat and keep **guanciale + rendered fat** (don't discard).

3) Cook the pasta

1. Boil salted water and cook bucatini **very al dente** (1–2 minutes less than package).
2. Drain well.

4) Make the carbocrema

1. In a bowl, whisk eggs (or yolks) with grated Pecorino Romano and plenty of black pepper until creamy.

5) Combine everything

1. In a large bowl, mix hot pasta with:
 - smoked provola
 - carbocrema
 - guanciale **with its fat**
 - béchamel
2. Stir thoroughly until it becomes **one cohesive, creamy mixture**.

6) Chill & shape

1. Press mixture into a baking dish in an even layer.
2. Cover and refrigerate **at least 4 hours** (firming is key).

3. Cut out rounds using a cookie cutter or ring mold.
4. Refrigerate shaped fritters **1 more hour**.

7) Make the batter (and chill)

1. Whisk water, flour, salt, and pepper until smooth.
2. Refrigerate **at least 2 hours**.

8) Fry

1. Heat oil to **350°F (180°C)**.
 2. Dip each frittatina in batter. *(Optional: roll in breadcrumbs after batter for extra crunch.)*
 3. Fry **about 4 minutes**, turning, until deeply golden.
 4. Drain on a rack or paper towels. Serve hot.
-

Tips & Tricks (Nonna-Approved)

- **Chill time isn't optional:** it prevents breakage and keeps them neat.
- **Ultra-creamy center:** don't overcook pasta; keep it al dente so it doesn't turn mushy.
- **Flavor booster:** the **rendered guanciale fat** is part of the magic—use it.
- **Batch frying:** keep oil temp steady at **350°F**; crowding drops the temp and makes them greasy.
- **Make ahead:** shape the rounds a day ahead and fry right before serving.