

What does this... have to do with this?



**Tortellini—small circles of rolled dough folded around a filling—are one of the most renowned members of the Italian pasta family.**

In the land of their birth, the region near the city of Bologna, they're strictly served as broth-like dumplings, traditionally on Christmas Eve and Easter. However, you can also serve them like any other pasta, with red sauce, butter, or cream sauce. However, it is said that these other sauces tend to kill the flavor of the tortellini filling. The broth is mild enough to let the flavor shine through.

Tortellini is the plural of tortellino (one of them) and means stuffed pastry (*torta* in Italian means cake, which is, of course, a pastry). Possibly no other pasta in Italian cuisine is surrounded by so much history and lore.

Here's a picture  
of Boticelli's

Venus. So what does she have to do with tortellini?

Legend claims that tortellini were inspired by the goddess Venus' navel.



Venus and Zeus, weary one night after their involvement in a battle between Bologna and Modena, arrived at a tavern in a small town on the outskirts of Bologna. After eating a hearty dinner and becoming slightly drunk, they decided to share a bedroom. The innkeeper, captivated after watching them eating and drinking, crept to their room and peeked through the keyhole of the bedroom door. But, alas, all he could see through the keyhole was the navel of Venus. This vision left him spellbound—so much so that he immediately rushed to the kitchen and created a pasta inspired by Venus' navel! And thus, the tortellino was born!

So how are tortellini made? [Click here](#) and 97-year old Albertina from Bologna will show you how.

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