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Pasta with Poached Egg, Frizzled Ham and Browned Butter

4 servings, tabled in under 30 minutes

- Salt and black pepper
- 1 pound spaghetti
- 4 to 8 tablespoons butter
- 20 slices ham, cut into ribbons
- 8 eggs
- Parmesan cheese, to taste

Set a large pot of water to boil and salt it. When the water is boiling, add the pasta. Meanwhile, add 1 tablespoon of the butter and the ham into a medium-size saute pan over medium-high heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the ham colors, about 2-3 minutes, then divide ham among 4 pasta bowls. Add remaining butter to the pan and when the foam subsides, crack the eggs into the pan. Cook them sunny side up, until the whites are nearly firm and the yolks very runny.

The butter will begin to color while the eggs are cooking; if it threatens to burn, lower the heat to medium. When the pasta is tender, but not mushy, drain it, reserving a bit of the cooking water. Put the pasta in the bowls. Use a spatula to transfer 2 eggs to each bowl of pasta and pour all the butter from the pan around the eggs onto the pasta. Slice the eggs on the pasta and toss them with the pasta, adding cheese, salt and pepper as desired. If necessary, add a little of the pasta cooking liquid to each dish to make a little more sauce. Serve.

Sweetnicks' Note: Delicious, easy, great weeknight meal.

