



## Restaurant Guide

# Alternative Pastas on the Rise

For many, a plate of spaghetti means pasta made from some type of wheat—semolina, durum, or lately, 100% whole wheat. But recently, pasta



*Pastas made of pulses and alternative grains are on the rise.*

has taken on a whole new look and taste. As a way to offer pasta to those intolerant of wheat, or to simply provide something new, food companies have begun creating pasta from all sorts of ingredients. You can now find macaroni made from soybeans, lentils, quinoa, and more.

These alternatives offer plenty of benefit. Of course, there's gluten-free, which is crucial for those who have a gluten intolerance or sensitivity. In addition, many new pastas can be fantastic sources of protein and fiber. One specific type of noodle, shirataki, is made from the flour of a white yam, meaning it's extremely low in calories and carbohydrates. This makes it an ideal alternative for controlling carbohydrate consumption. Nutritionally speaking, there's no real downside to these pastas. If you need to avoid gluten, if you're looking to boost your protein or fiber intake, or if you'd like to expand your palate, alternative pastas are an ideal addition to your shopping list.

**Helpful Hints.** As you head to the pasta aisle, keep these tips in mind.

- ▶ **Price Check.** If you're budget-minded, check the price tags before tossing several boxes or bags into your cart. While traditional pasta rings up at about \$1.00 a pound, alternative pastas can range from about \$3.00 a pound upwards to \$14.00 per pound.
- ▶ **Read the Directions.** If you've cooked spaghetti a million times, don't just assume these are cooked the same way. One sprouted grain pasta on the list cooks in half the time, while another brown rice pasta boils for a few minutes and is then left in a covered pot for several more minutes.
- ▶ **Portion Control.** Just because many of these pastas are nutrient-filled and may be considered healthier than traditional pastas, that's not a free pass to eat huge quantities. Most of these pastas have roughly the same calories as traditional pastas. To avoid a negative impact on your waist be sure to check portion size and use it as your guide when serving pasta. **EN**

—Heidi McIndoo, MS, RD

## Alternative Pastas Nutritional Comparison

✓ = EN's Picks. As with all EN comparisons, this is only a sampling of products. Picks contain at least 4 g of fiber (7% DV).

ALTERNATIVE PASTAS	Serving Size*	Calories	Total Fat (g)	Sat Fat (g)	Carbs (g)	Sodium (mg)	Fiber (g)	Sugar (g)	Protein (g)
Alce Nero Organic Spelt Spaghetti	56	39	0.2	0	8	0	0.5	<1	1
Alce Nero Organic Spelt Penne Rigate	56	39	0.2	0	8	0	0.5	<1	1
Alce Nero Organic Corn & Rice Spaghetti	56	78	<1	<1	17	0	<1	<1	1.5
Andean Dream Quinoa Pasta Organic Macaroni	56	207	1	0	42	0	3	3	6
Andean Dream Quinoa Spaghetti	56	207	1	0	42	0	3	3	6
✓ Ancient Harvest Pow! Pasta Green Lentil Penne	56	200	1	0	35	0	7	1	14
✓ Ancient Harvest Supergrain Pasta Bean & Quinoa Elbows	56	190	1	0	35	7	7	1	12
✓ Ancient Harvest Supergrain Pasta Organic Corn & Quinoa Blend Shells	56	210	1	0	46	0	4	1	4
✓ Banza Elbows made from Chickpeas	57	190	3.5	0	32	60	8	5	14
✓ Banza Spaghetti made from Chickpeas	57	190	3.5	0	32	60	8	5	14
Barilla Gluten Free Elbows	56	200	1	0	44	0	1	0	4
Barilla Gluten Free Spaghetti	56	200	1	0	44	0	1	0	4
DeBoles Muligrain Penne	56	200	2	0	43	20	3	0	4
DeBoles Rice Lasagna	71	260	1.5	0	57	15	2	0	5
Bionaturae Organic Gluten Free Linguine	57	200	1	0	42	0	2	1	5
✓ Explore Cuisine Organic Black Bean Spaghetti	56	215	2	0	23	4	12	4	25
✓ Explore Cuisine Organic Edamame Mung Bean Fettuccini	56	205	2	0	21	3	11	4	22
✓ Ezekiel 4:9 Sprouted Grain Pasta Spaghetti	56	210	2	0.5	39	10	7	0	9
House Foods Smart Noodle Spaghetti Shirataki	56	10	0.5	0	3	3	3	0	1
House Foods Tofu Shirataki Spaghetti	56	5	<1	0	1.5	8	1	0	<1
House Foods Traditional Shirataki	56	0	0	0	<1	0	0	0	0
Jovial Brown Rice Pasta Fusilli	57	210	2	0	43	0	2	0	5
Jovial Traditional Egg Pasta Tagliatelle	57	210	3	0	40	15	2	0	5
✓ Lundberg Organic Brown Rice Pasta Rotini	56	190	3	0.5	41	0	4	1	4
✓ Lundberg Organic Brown Rice Pasta Spaghetti	56	190	3	0.5	41	0	4	1	4
Miracle Noodle Black Shirataki	56	7	0	0	2	0	1	0	<1
Miracle Noodle Organic Spaghetti	56	3	0	0	<1	0	<1	0	<1
Miracle Noodle Organic Ziti	56	3	0	0	1	0	<1	0	0
Modern Table Meals Lentil Penne	55	190	0.5	0	32	10	3	3	15
Schar Bonta d'Italia Penne	55	200	1	1	43	0	1	0	4
Schar Bonta d'Italia Spaghetti	56	210	1	0	44	65	1	3	5
Tinkyada Pasta Joy Organic Brown Rice Pasta Shells	60	230	2	0.5	47	0	2	0	5
Tinkyada Pasta Joy Organic Brown Rice Pasta Spaghetti	56	210	2	0	44	0	2	0	4
✓ Tolerant Organic Black Bean Penne	56	213	1	0	37	7	10	7	15
✓ Tolerant Organic Red Lentil Rotini	56	200	<1	0	35	10	7	<1	14
✓ Trader Joe's Organic Black Bean Rotini	56	200	1.5	0	35	0	15	2	14
Trader Joe's Organic Brown Rice Pasta Penne	56	200	1.5	0	43	0	2	0	4
Trader Joe's Organic Brown Rice & Quinoa Fusilli	56	200	1.5	0	43	0	2	0	5
Trader Joe's Organic Brown Rice & Quinoa Spaghetti	56	200	1.5	0	43	0	2	0	5
Trader Joe's Organic Brown Rice Pasta Spaghetti	56	200	1.5	0	43	0	2	0	4

Note: g=gram, mg=milligram, sat fat=saturated fat, carb=carbohydrates, DV=Daily Value, Daily requirement based on 2,000 calorie/day diet. Source: food product labels and websites