

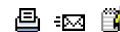


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New invention revolutionises spaghetti eating

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Spaghetti is one of Italy's most famous and well-loved dishes but diners often find it difficult to eat it gracefully and without making a mess.

No need for a spoon with this new innovative pasta plate (edipresse/DiNolfi)

It's a familiar problem for many pasta lovers – how to stop spaghetti from slipping off your fork and onto your shirt.

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But help may be at hand in the form of a new pasta plate, designed by two enterprising students at Lausanne hotel school – Mehdi Derouazi and Frank Martin.

The plate has been designed with a hollow in the middle, which the diner uses to twist the spaghetti onto his fork – instead of the usual spoon.

"It works perfectly well and you don't get any stain on your shirt," co-inventor Frank Martin told swissinfo.

The idea came about after the hotel school students were asked to invent something for the Evian Inventors Fair.

Martin's father, who is disabled, suggested a plate that would make eating his favourite dish easier.

Swiss invention

The result took first prize at the fair and the two young



inventors are now preparing to launch their product, which has been patented, on the Swiss market.

The Swiss are the second biggest consumers of pasta after the Italians, putting away ten kilos per person a year compared with the 22 kilos gobbled up annually in Italy.

Derouazi and Martin are hoping to expand into Britain by 2004, before heading for Spain and France and possibly further afield to America and Asia.

But Italy itself remains out of bounds for the time being, as the birthplace of pasta generally frowns upon the practice of eating spaghetti with the help of a spoon.

The inventors have already received orders from the Canary Islands and Spain and hope to concentrate on hotels and restaurants as a principal market.

Rigorous tests


Martin is confident that the pasta plate will be successful, especially as it recently passed a rigorous testing by 600 Swiss students.

The project has taken five years and a lot of spaghetti to get right, but despite that Martin says he has not lost his appetite for the Italian dish.


"As you can imagine the last couple of years I've been eating spaghetti much more than usual to prove the final design," he told swissinfo.

"But I'm not really sick of it yet, I can still handle it for another couple of years."

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