

## PASTA WITH MUSSELS IN SAFFRON SAUCE

(adapted from [Food and Wine magazine](#))

2 cups dry white wine  
4 bay leaves  
4 pounds small mussels, scrubbed and de-bearded  
Pinch of saffron threads  
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 garlic clove, thinly sliced  
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper  
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
linguine  
Salt and freshly ground pepper  
minced parsley, to taste

In a large pot, combine the wine with the bay leaves and bring to a boil. Add the mussels, cover and cook over high heat, shaking the pan a few times, until the mussels open, about 5 minutes. Drain the mussels in a colander set over a medium bowl. Pour the mussel broth into a glass measure. Crumble the saffron into the hot mussel broth. Reserve.

Discard any unopened mussels. Remove the mussels from their shells and place in a separate bowl. Pour the melted butter over the mussels and toss to coat. Cover with plastic wrap.

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet. Add the thinly sliced garlic and cook over low heat just it gets some color. If you prefer, remove the garlic, if not, leave it in, and add the crushed red pepper, cooking together for one minute. Slowly pour in the reserved mussel broth, stopping when you reach the grit at the bottom of the glass measure. Add the lemon juice and simmer over moderately high heat until the sauce is reduced to about 1 cup, about 8 minutes.

In a large pot of boiling, salted water, cook the pasta just until *al dente*. Drain the pasta well. Add the buttered mussels and the hot spaghetti to the mussel sauce and toss over low heat until the pasta is uniformly coated. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with parsley and serve.