

## Pasta and White Clam Sauce: Seafood Italiano on a Shoestring



Want to celebrate seafood on a shoestring budget? With this entrée you'll be dishing up romance and building up your travel account at the same time. Bonus? This is another one of those recipes you can basically eye-ball in order to come out with the batch size you want.

Two main keys to saving money on this meal? Bulk canned clams and [DIY white sauce mix](#). Bulk canned clams can be purchased at either Sam's Club or Costco. If you don't have a large warehouse store near you, you can at least get the [28 ounce size](#) cans of clams on Amazon. One large can get yield a large batch of creamy clam sauce from which the leftovers can be used for either chowder or dip. Talk about a multi-purpose recipe.

**Here's what you need:** one giant can of clams (juice reserved), one package of reduced fat cream cheese, an amount of white sauce mix suitable for the size of the batch you are making, [olive oil](#), dried [Parmesan](#) or Romano to taste, an optional amount of skim milk or fat free half and half, sea salt and cracked pepper corns.

Mix the white sauce mix with the clam juice instead of water. This will really nail the flavor element without unnecessary salt additives from standard seafood bases. Add in the reduced fat cream cheese and allow to melt, along with any amount of the milk you feel is necessary to give you the desired "weight" to your sauce. Too much sauce mix can easily result in a wall paper paste type of consistency, and if this happens, it is easily thinned out with milk. Add in the clams, a bit of olive oil and seasonings. You can either make this on the fly, or slow simmer in a crock pot, providing you don't over-cook things until the milk solids separate.

While certainly suitable for a fettuccini or linguini noodle, I feel penne is an often overlooked option for medium weight sauces. With this in mind, I served my most recent batch of white clam sauce with [Garofalo's](#) new addition to their signature line, the whole wheat penne rigate. The ridges as well as the hollow space inside the pasta make for an excellent vehicle of flavor.

Looking for an affordable way to sex it up and take the entrée to the next level? Consider some chopped scallions or fresh parsley for a garnish, along with some freshly grated [specialty cheese](#). Serve with a nice [organic white wine](#) or a decent boxed blush [spritzer](#). Then, meander out to the patio for at-home al fresco dining on the cheap.