

# Cleo Coyle's Skinny Pumpkin Alfredo

Text and photos (c) by Alice Alfonsi who writes [The Coffeehouse Mysteries](#) as [Cleo Coyle](#) with her husband, Marc Cerasini.

This is an easy dish to make and even though it uses low fat milk and very little butter, it tastes rich and decadent. Pumpkin puree is the trick. While adding creaminess (without extra dairy) the pumpkin also adds nutrition and fiber, making this a wonderful no-guilt indulgence. Don't worry about the taste of pumpkin. You'll hardly know it's there. We like to eat it this beautiful, creamy sauce over spinach fettuccine or one of the high-fiber pastas now on the market. Higher protein semolina pastas are also a nice way to up the nutrition of this already good-for-you dish. May you eat with joy and in good health! ~ Cleo

*Serves 2 large or 4 small servings*

## For the Pasta:

8 ounces fresh cooked fettuccine (*half of a one-pound box*)

## For the Sauce:

1 Tablespoon butter

1/4 teaspoon garlic powder (*or 1 clove of fresh garlic, minced*)

1/2 cup low fat milk (*2% for best results*)

1/2 cup pumpkin puree (*canned is fine, but be sure to use "pumpkin" and not "pumpkin pie" filling*)

1/4 teaspoon Kosher salt (*or 1/8 teaspoon table salt*)

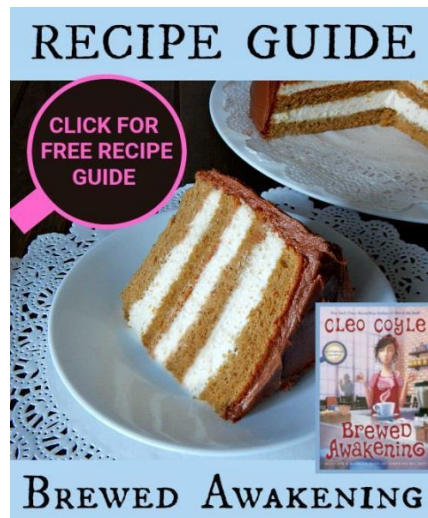
2 ounces Neufchatel cheese (*or low-fat cream cheese*)

3/4 cup shredded Parmesan, Pecorino Romano, or aged (hard) Asiago cheese

*Or a combination of 2 or all 3 cheeses (\*Also see my **note** on page 2.)*

## Optional Garnishes:

Freshly ground black pepper and/or Lemon zest  
and/or Finely chopped fresh Italian parsley



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**Step 1:** Prepare fettuccine according to package directions. Drain and set aside.

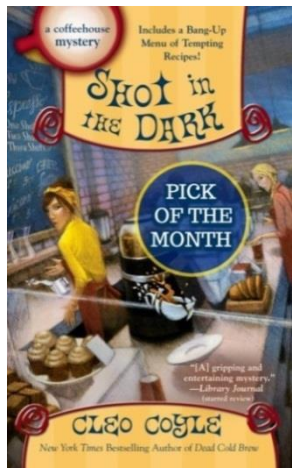
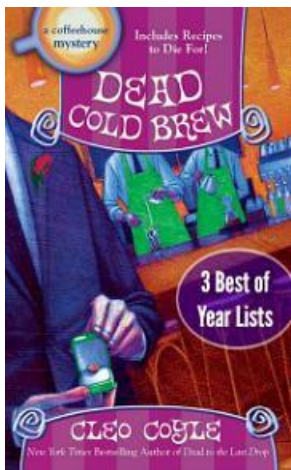
**Step 2:** While the pasta is cooking, make the sauce. Melt the butter in a medium- size saucepan over medium heat. Add the garlic powder (or minced garlic) and cook and stir for about a minute. Stir in the milk, pumpkin, salt, Neufchatel or low-fat cream cheese, and shredded hard cheese (Parmesan, Romano, or Asiago or a combination of the three). Stir continually for 3 to 5 minutes, until cheese completely melts, and the sauce thickens. Keeping the sauce nice and hot, fold in the drained fettuccine and coat noodles.



**Step 3:** Serve immediately. This dish is delicious as is or try these garnishes to add even more complexity to the flavors: ground black pepper; lemon zest; and/or finely chopped fresh Italian parsley (and/or a sprinkling of ground, dried Italian herbs, such as a mix of oregano, rosemary, and basil).

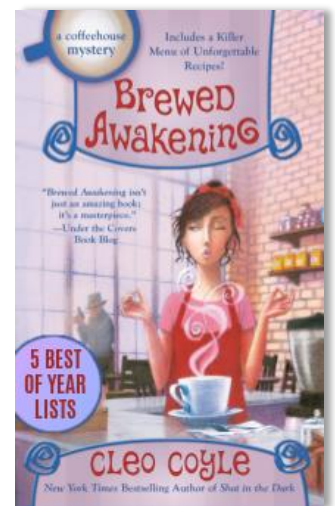
**\*NOTE:** This recipe is quite versatile when it comes to the cheese. As mentioned in the recipe, you can use shredded Parmesan, Pecorino Romano, Asiago, or a combination of the three. My one piece of advice is this: Do not use pre-shredded cheeses. You know the ones: they hang in a bag in your grocer's refrigerator case. Those cheeses have "non-clumping" agents included (like potato starch) and those ingredients will retard the melting of the cheese into your sauce. Buy the cheese fresh and shred it yourself. You will get much better results.

*Eat with joy! ~ Cleo*



The [Coffeehouse Mysteries](#) are bestselling culinary mysteries, set in a landmark Greenwich Village coffeehouse. Each includes the added bonus of recipes.

To learn more and see more recipes, visit Cleo Coyle's online coffeehouse at [www.CoffeehouseMystery.com](http://www.CoffeehouseMystery.com) And her recipe blog at [www.CleoCoyleRecipes.com](http://www.CleoCoyleRecipes.com)



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