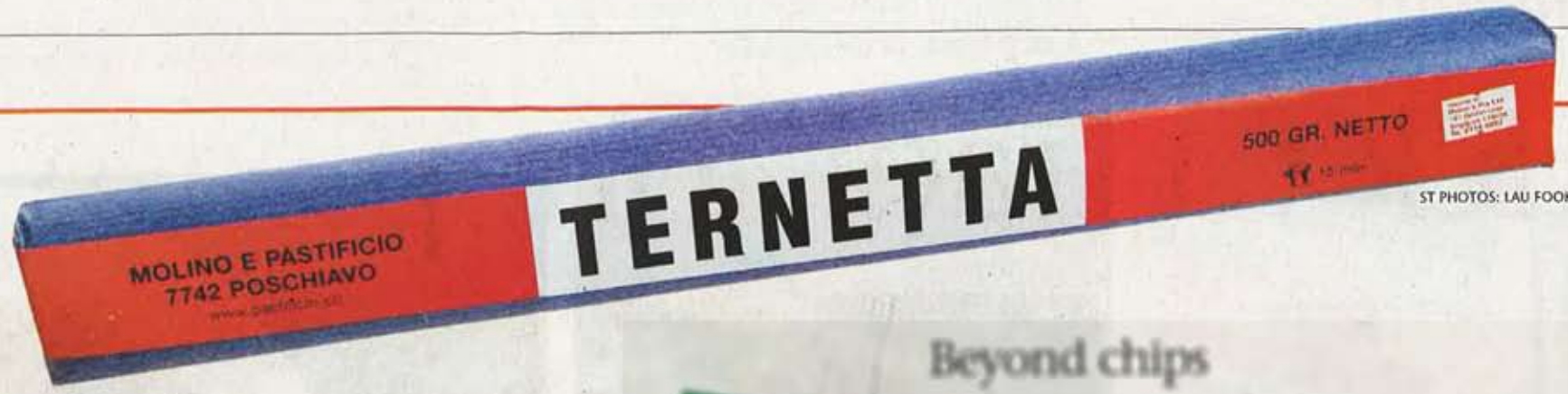
For good measure



ST PHOTOS: LAU FOOK KONG

Posh Nosh
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Food Editor

How, a friend asks, are you going to fit the pasta in the pot? I wondered that myself, while contemplating whether or not to get a pack of Molino E Pastificio's extra long Ternetta, a linguine-shaped pasta.

At 41.5cm, it is about 10cm longer than most other linguine. But I stuck it in a pot of boiling salted water and the noodles slid right down rather quickly, without any pushing.

Despite the name of the company, this pasta is made in Valle di Poschiavo in Switzerland, north of Valtellina in Lombardy, Italy. What I notice about it straightaway is that the uncooked pasta feels rough to the touch. This is a good thing because sauces cling better to it.

It takes 15 minutes to cook – a few minutes more than regular pasta. Drained and tossed in a pan of garlic sauteed in olive oil, with chopped flat leaf parsley and pepper added, it makes a terrific meal.

Done plain like this, you taste the nutty flavour of the noodles. They are also just a bit chewy, which adds to the pleasure of eating them.

Even better is to toss the pasta with Nduja, a soft, spicy spreadable pork sausage from Calabria that you can get in jars. I got mine from a little shop in Rome.

Although it fits awkwardly into my pantry, I think this might well be my default linguine now.

Molino E Pastificio Ternetta, $11.50 for a 500g pack, from Huber's Butchery, 18A Dempsey Road, tel: 6737-1588, open: 9.30am to 8pm (weekdays), 9.30am to 7pm (weekends)

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Beyond chips

The salt-and-vinegar combo seems to have gone beyond potato chips, as these two goodies indicate.

First up is Walkers Crisps Coated Peanuts (left), $4.95 for a 130g bag. The British company makes tastier potato chips and I especially like its salt-and-vinegar one. It has taken that popular flavour and added it to a crisp coating for peanuts.

Although the vinegar flavour is not as sharp as in a chip, there is a lot more going on in this snack – the coating, which has a light sweetness, and the peanuts, which add some richness.

Jacob's, another British brand, has added salt and vinegar to crackers in its Jacob's Oddities (right), $3.50 for a 120g pack) range. It seems a harebrained idea except that it works very well.

Shaped like dog bones, cannons and submarines, among other wacky shapes, the crackers, which are baked, taste great. Unlike some brands of salt-and-vinegar crisps, which bite the tongue ferociously, there is just enough vinegar in these crackers to produce a mild, delicious tingle.

Salt and vinegar snacks, Mitsli-Ya Supermarket, [illegible] Liang Court, tel: [illegible], open: 10am to 10pm daily

Summer in a tasty chip

My Facebook newsfeed is full of photos of friends relishing the hot weather in the United Kingdom. There are pictures of them by the beach, eating ice cream, wearing hats.

"You're enjoying the heat?" I ask one of my friends incredulously.

"Well, it's been about seven years since we've had a decent summer," he says, adding that he took advantage of the weather to grill away outdoors.

Marks & Spencer, who seem to know when a decent summer is coming, has introduced a range of products called Great British Summer.

The Neapolitan Cookies (above, $8.30 for a 250g pack) are nutty, recalling the ice cream which has layers of chocolate, strawberry and vanilla flavours.

They taste like Neapolitan ice cream too, these buttery biscuits. The strawberry and vanilla are worked into the cookie dough and the chocolate part comes in white and milk chocolate chips in the cookies.

There are also packs of Fish & Chips Hand-cooked Potato Chips (left), $1.90 for a 40g pack). There is no trace of fish flavour in the chips, which is rather a good thing. For the lady-bits of malt vinegar people add to their fish and chips are very apparent here.

Salt and vinegar chips by another name. A great idea for any time of the year.

Great British Summer snacks from Marks & Spencer stores, including 290 Orchard Road, [illegible] Penguin Shopping Centre, and 253 North Bridge Road, [illegible] Raffles City Shopping Centre. Go to global.marksandspencer.com/sg/ for full list of stores

Plain crackers, wholesome snack

The packaging for Westminster Bakers Co looks a little austere and it might well get lost in a sea of biscuit boxes with colourful packaging on supermarket shelves, all vying for attention.

But it would be a pity to overlook these little crackers. They look plain and taste plain too, sometimes, that is what we all need – food that is not so showy, not fancied up, not filled with salt and other additives.

The Wholegrain Snack Crackers (far right) are made with soft winter wheat, wheat sourdough, wheat germ, rye germ, flax seeds, rye sourdough, and millet and teff seeds.

They have a pleasing crunch to them and are good eaten just on their own, but throw some on top of a bowl of creamy clam chowder or tomato soup, and they are delicious too.

The Cheddar-flavoured shapes (far left) are cute, but the cheese flavour does not come on very strongly. Still, because they are free of harmful and preservatives, they make a healthy snack.

Westminster Bakers Co Snack Crackers, $3.30 for a 227g box, from FairPrice Finest, $5.03 Scotts Square, tel: [illegible], open: 8am to 11pm daily