

Regardless of what you may think and contrary to popular belief, pasta is not an Italian invention, but a Chinese one. To be more specific, legend has it that Marco Polo, the explorer, learnt the recipe for pasta from the Chinese and brought it to Italy. Pasta is the most important food in Italy. In fact, it is served (1) ... a starter to any meal. It is (2) ... only popular in Italy, but also in other countries, where it is served with different sauces. (3) ... are so many of them that even the most fussy eaters are sure to find something they like. But that's only part of its success. Pasta is also relatively easy to produce and transport around the world, which makes it a popular product with food companies as (4) ...

Прочитайте текст. Заполните пропуск (4) только одним словом, подходящим по смыслу. Слово должно содержать не более 15 символов.