

Recipes

Marinara Sauce

from the Episode: *Italian Classics*

This recipe makes enough to sauce more than a pound of pasta; leftovers can be refrigerated or frozen. Because canned tomatoes vary in acidity and saltiness, it's best to add salt, pepper, and sugar to taste just before serving. If you prefer a chunkier sauce, give it just three or four pulses in the food processor in step 4.

Makes 4 cups

- 2 (28 ounce) cans whole tomatoes , *packed in juice*
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion , *chopped fine (about 1 cup)*
- 2 medium cloves garlic , *minced or pressed through garlic press (about 2 teaspoons)*
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/3 cup dry red wine , *such as Chianti or Merlot*
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- Table salt and ground black pepper
- 1 - 2 teaspoons sugar , *as needed (see note above)*

1. Pour tomatoes and juice into strainer set over large bowl. Open tomatoes with hands and remove and discard fibrous cores; let tomatoes drain excess liquid, about 5 minutes. Remove 3/4 cup tomatoes from strainer and set aside. Reserve 2 1/2 cups tomato juice and discard remainder.
2. Heat olive oil in large skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and golden around edges, 6 to 8 minutes. Add garlic and oregano and cook, stirring constantly, until garlic is fragrant, about 30 seconds.
3. Add tomatoes from strainer and increase heat to medium-high. Cook, stirring every minute, until liquid has evaporated and tomatoes begin to stick to bottom of pan and brown fond forms around pan edges, 10 to 12 minutes. Add wine and cook until thick and syrupy, about 1 minute. Add reserved tomato juice and bring to simmer; reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally and loosening browned bits, until sauce is thick, 8 to 10 minutes.
4. Transfer sauce to food processor (or transfer to saucepan and insert immersion blender; see the related article "Do You Really Need a Hand Blender?") and add reserved tomatoes; process until slightly chunky, about eight 2-second pulses. Return sauce to skillet and add basil and extra-virgin olive oil and salt, pepper, and sugar to taste.

Step-by-Step: Getting Slow-Simmered Flavor Fast



DRAIN JUICE: A can of tomatoes has more juice than solids. We jump-start flavor concentration by draining off almost a cup of juice beforehand.



CARAMELIZE SOLIDS: Caramelizing the tomato solids briskly in a large skillet before deglazing with liquid ingredients further deepens the flavor profile.



ADD RAW TOMATOES: Reserving a few uncooked tomatoes to add near the end of cooking contributes an extra note of freshness to the cooked sauce.