

# How to make Italian Preserves

## Italian Pasata

If you only have a kilo or two of Roma tomatoes you can create this authentic Italian passata but on a smaller scale.

### You will need:

- A large, stainless steel cooking pot, for cooking the raw tomatoes
- A colander to strain them
- A mouli mill to press the tomatoes and separate the pulp from the peel and seeds
- A stockpot, or large saucepan, for preserving the tomatoes. If you have a Fowlers Vacola kit, this does the same thing
- Bottles or jars of varying sizes, intact and with clean, non-pitted lids. Make sure they are very clean (though no need to sterilize them).

### Method:

- Wash the Roma style tomatoes thoroughly and individually core the tops off each, cutting away any yellow unripe parts or rotten bits.
- Place your tomatoes in a pot of boiling water (you may need to do several batches) and let the water return to the boil. Boil gently for 2-3 minutes and then scoop the tomatoes out and leave them to strain in the colander.
- Leave them to cool slightly to make them easier to handle.
- Then put them through the mouli mill, to strain all of the pulp from the seeds and the flesh.
- Stir the resulting sauce thoroughly to get an even consistency.
- Bottle the sauce, adding a leaf or two of washed basil in each jar.
- Wipe any sauce off the jar rims and cap tightly.

### Hot water bath preserving method:

- Place a thick tea-towel on the bottom and the sides of the stockpot and place the filled jars inside, so they are tightly packed. If not, you will need to pack some cardboard (or more tea towels) between the jars so they don't knock against each other. If you can fit in more than one layer, put a cushioning barrier between the layers of jars.
- Fill the stockpot with cool or lukewarm water and SLOWLY bring to the boil.
- Once boiling, keep it gently simmering for 20-30 minutes and then turn off the heat.
- Allow to cool in this preserving pot and then (usually the next day) remove and store in a cool, dark, dry place.

Enjoy!



## Summer vegies in oil (sott'olio)

You can use green tomatoes for this preserving method, or small zucchinis, eggplants and green capsicum. Try a combination of them all. The method is the same.

1. Wash the green tomatoes and cut into 5mm thick slices.
2. Layer them in a ceramic or glass bowl, sprinkling each layer liberally with coarse cooking salt.
3. Place a plate over the top and weigh down the plate with a bowl or something heavy (e.g. a bowl filled with water or a brick).
4. Leave this overnight.
5. The next day, rinse off the salty water that has accumulated and then put the tomato slices back into the bowl, this time adding white wine vinegar. You should only need 1 cup or less, depending on how many vegies you have. Weigh the contents down again and leave overnight.
6. The next day, drain the tomatoes and squeeze any excess moisture out by hand. You can put a batch at a time in a clean, dry tea towel and then wring out the tomatoes by twisting the tea towel.
7. Loosen all the slices and put them back into the bowl.
8. Pour a generous amount of olive oil and mix the tomatoes so that they are all coated. They are now ready to pack into clean sterile jars, making sure there are no air gaps between the layers. I like to add a little extra flavour by adding dried herbs (e.g. oregano), chopped garlic and maybe some chilli. Peppercorns or bay leaves could also be used.
9. Pack them into the jars, attempting to eliminate any air pockets. Once full, top up with more oil so that the contents are completely covered. If any are uncovered, they will go mouldy.
10. Leave them for a month to develop more flavour and then enjoy with some crusty bread as part of an antipasto spread.

**Buonissimo!!**



## Bottled peeled tomatoes

Make your own authentic peeled tomatoes in jars of varying sizes, so that you can always use the amount that is convenient to your recipe.

### You will need:

- 2 large bowls for preparing the peeled tomatoes
- A stockpot, or large saucepan, for the preserving of the tomatoes. If you have a Fowlers Vacola kit, this does the same thing
- Bottles or jars of varying sizes, intact and with clean, non-pitted lids. Make sure they are very clean (though no need to sterilize them).

### Method:

- Wash the ripe tomatoes thoroughly and then score them at the base in the shape of a cross. Place them in a large, heatproof bowl.
- Pour boiling water over the tomatoes and leave them there for 10 minutes or so.
- Strain off the water and allow the tomatoes to cool slightly to make them easier to handle.
- Starting at the base with the cuts, peel away the skin from each tomato. If it is still too hard to remove, use a knife to help you without taking away too much of the flesh.
- Cut the tomatoes into small pieces and squeeze these gently to try and remove the watery pulp containing the seeds. This amount will depend on the type of tomato you are using.
- Into your clean jars, press as many of these cut tomatoes into the jar as will fit, leaving a small airspace at the top. As you do this, more watery pulp will develop and you can carefully discard this to fit more tomatoes in.
- Clean the rim of the jar and then secure jar lids tightly.
- Process in a hot water bath as described for Italian passata.

### Notes:

You can modify this method if you have mountains of cherry tomatoes. Instead of peeling, just cut the washed tomatoes in half and squeeze them in and process them as described. Your resulting preserve will have bits of tomato skins so use these jars in recipes where it doesn't really matter.



# Pomarola semplice: simple tomato pasta sauce

Adapted from 'Twelve, A Tuscan Cookbook' by Tessa Kiros

Now that tomatoes are plentiful it's time to put some work in to have your own stir-through pasta sauce ready to serve when you are in a rush. It has a lovely fresh tomato sauce flavour. Use as it is or as a base to make a veggie pasta sauce.

## Ingredients

- 3 garlic cloves, peeled and lightly crushed with the flat of a large knife blade
- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- 1.2kg of ripe fresh tomatoes, skinned and chopped
- About 12 basil leaves, roughly torn

## Method:

- Put the garlic and olive oil into a saucepan on a medium heat. When the garlic begins to sizzle, add the tomatoes. Season with a teaspoon of salt and a little pepper.
- When the tomatoes begin to boil, lower the heat and simmer for about 20 minutes, depending on how much water the tomatoes contain. Break up the tomatoes with a wooden spoon and cook until the tomatoes have melted into a thick, smooth sauce. Take care not to dry out the sauce – it should have a thick, soft consistency.
- Blend the sauce through a food mill or puree roughly in a blender.
- Add basil at the end.
- Pour the sauce into hot clean jars immediately, secure lids tightly and then process in a hot water bath as described for Italian passata, starting with warm (not cold) water.

Makes about 750ml.



## MORE INFO

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