

RAVIOLI WITH ROASTED TOMATO SAUCE

Serves 8 to 10.

By Dennis W. Viau; from recipes found on the Internet.

I wanted an excuse to experiment with a sauce made from oven-roasted tomatoes. I've made ravioli plenty of times, but never such a sauce. I tasted a similar sauce in a chefs' demonstration and I wanted to duplicate that sauce for my own recipe collection. This recipe worked very well.



Ingredients:

For the Pasta:

2 large eggs
½ teaspoon salt
¾ cup (128g) pasta flour (durum wheat semolina)
¾ cup (110g) all-purpose flour
(or 1½ cups (220g) all purpose flour if pasta flour is unavailable)

For the Meat Filling:

2 tablespoons olive oil
¼ large onion; chopped and caramelized
4 ounces (113g) ground beef
4 ounces (113g) ground pork
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ teaspoon dried thyme
½ teaspoon dried oregano flakes
1 clove garlic; minced
Generous grating (⅓ teaspoon) fresh nutmeg
¾ teaspoon salt
2 eggs (one for egg wash)
¼ cup (¾ ounce / 21g) bread crumbs

For the Sauce:

4 pounds (1.8kg) ripe Roma tomatoes
4 garlic cloves; whole, not peeled
2 tablespoons olive oil
¾ large onion; chopped
1 cup beef broth
2 anchovy fillets
Generous grating (⅓ teaspoon) fresh nutmeg
8 to 9 Italian parsley (flat leaf) stalks, leaves only; finely chopped
6 to 8 basil leaves; finely chopped or cut into chiffonade (see Step 23 below)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Directions:

The pasta dough will need to rest for at least an hour; so start it first by breaking the eggs into a mixing bowl and adding most of the two types of flour with the salt. Combine until you have a dough dry enough to knead. Transfer to a clean surface and knead, working in additional flour, until you have a stiff dough. Wrap in plastic and let rest in the refrigerator for at least an hour.

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While the dough is resting, prepare the tomatoes for roasting by cutting an “X” in the bottom of each tomato. Heat water to boiling in a large pot. Submerge the tomatoes, a few at a time, in the boiling water and cook less than a minute. Remove from the water and set aside to cool until safe to handle. Peel and discard the skin. Cut each tomato in half across the middle. Remove and discard the seeds.

Heat your oven to 400°F (200°C). Line one or two roasting pans with parchment paper and place the tomatoes in the pan. Fold the garlic cloves in a piece of parchment paper and place in the pan with the tomatoes. Roast for about 1 hour, until the tomatoes are well browned on the bottom. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool.

While tomatoes are roasting, heat oil in a skillet and sauté the onion until caramelized, 15 to 20 minutes, reducing the heat periodically as the onions cook and gain color. Remove from the pan and divide the onions into $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ portions to be used in the meat filling and the sauce, respectively.

Heat oil in the skillet and sauté the ground meat until cooked thoroughly, 4 to 5 minutes. Add the parsley, black pepper, thyme, oregano, garlic, and nutmeg. Cook an additional minute. Adjust for salt. Remove from the heat and allow to cool a little. Place the meat with the $\frac{1}{4}$ caramelized onion prepared earlier in a food processor and process briefly to reduce the size of the meat chunks. Transfer to a bowl and mix with the bread crumbs and the egg. Cover and set aside until needed.

Heat the beef broth in a large skillet to boiling. Add the anchovy fillets. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer to reduce the liquid to less than half.

Place roasted tomatoes in a food processor. Open the garlic packet and cut open each of the garlic cloves. Squeeze the roasted garlic from each clove into the tomatoes. Process the tomatoes until smooth. Add to the reduced beef broth and combine. The sauce can be thickened, if needed, by simmering over medium-low heat, stirring often to prevent scorching. Season with salt and pepper. Add chopped fresh parsley and basil. Remove from the heat and set aside. It can be heated when needed.

Using a pasta machine, roll the pasta dough into thin sheets, dusting with flour as needed to prevent sticking to the machine rollers. Roll the dough thinner than is typical for noodles because the ravioli will be made with two sheets of pasta dough and therefore the thickness will be doubled. Spoon small amounts of meat filling onto one sheet of pasta, leaving space in between. Brush the sheet between the filling with an egg wash made from an egg white and a teaspoon of water. Press a second sheet of pasta dough onto the first, carefully pressing the dough around the filling to eliminate as much air as possible and sealing the two sheets together where brushed with egg wash. Cut the ravioli with a knife or fluted cutting wheel (or other ravioli gadget).

Heat water to boiling in a large pot. Boil the ravioli until the pasta dough is cooked, about 1 minute, and then drain.

Arrange ravioli on serving plates and spoon sauce on top. Garnish with grated Parmesan or Romano cheese, if desired, and additional basil cut in chiffonade. Serve warm.

The step-by-step photos were removed. See the video for the preparation.