

Roasted Tomato and Anchovy Bucatini

Serves 4

This recipe, modified from *Dining In*, is a simple combination of anchovies melted into slow-roasted tomatoes with barely caramelized red onion. It's truly revelatory—it's the dish that inspired a teenaged me to start cooking in the first place (thanks, Stephanie Mayerson!), and I'm overly sentimental. As the tomatoes roast, their sugars come out and caramelize, water evaporates, and flavors concentrate, making a superlative tomato sauce. When I'm blessed with an abundance of tomatoes in the summer, I like to make this sauce and freeze it so that I can eat this pasta in the coldest months, when I want it the most.

Modified from Dining In.

Ingredients

Kosher salt

¼ cup olive oil, plus more for drizzling

½ small red onion, very thinly sliced

Crushed red pepper flakes

4 anchovy fillets (optional, for picky eaters)

2 tablespoons tomato paste

1 (28-ounce) can whole peeled tomatoes, crushed

12 ounces bucatini or spaghetti

Lots of grated Parmesan cheese

Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
2. Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a large skillet or heavy-bottomed pan over medium heat. Add the onion and season with salt and a pinch of red pepper flakes. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is totally cooked through but not browned, 10 to 15 minutes. Add the anchovies and stir until they've melted into the pan, about 30 seconds. Add the tomato paste and cook until it turns a brick-red color and sticks a bit to the bottom of the pan, about 90 seconds.
3. Add the tomatoes, scraping up any bits on the bottom of the skillet. Season with salt and reduce the heat to medium-low. Cook, swirling the skillet occasionally, until the sauce thickens and it tastes so good you can hardly stand it. Add more salt and red pepper flakes if you want. Keep warm and set aside.
4. Meanwhile, cook the pasta in the boiling water. Drain, reserving 1 cup of the pasta cooking water.
5. Add the pasta along with ½ cup of the pasta cooking water to the skillet and toss to coat. Cook, tossing occasionally, until the pasta is really well coated, the sauce sticking to each individual noodle in away that can only be described as perfect.
6. Remove the skillet from the heat and transfer the pasta to a large bowl, or divide it among four smaller bowls. Top with lots of Parmesan cheese.

DO AHEAD: Tomato sauce can be made 5 days ahead and refrigerated or 1 month ahead and frozen.

ALISON ROMAN