

# Tomato treasures

Luca Ciano passes on to us his mother's recipe for *passata di pomodoro*, the traditional tomato sauce made and bottled by Italian families every summer to see them through the coming year, and five special ways to try it.

PHOTOGRAPHY Vanessa Levis STYLING Jenn Tolhurst



Veal involtini  
with porcini  
mushrooms, p76

EAT OUT  
AT HOME

## MASTER RECIPE: LUCA'S TOMATO PASSATA

MAKES 2L PREP 1hr COOK 30mins

### YOU WILL NEED:

5kg ripe Roma tomatoes

1 bunch basil, leaves only

**STEP ONE** Cut a cross in base of each tomato. Bring a pan of water to boil. Cook tomatoes in batches for 30-60 secs, until skins start to split. Remove with a slotted spoon and place in iced water. Peel, halve and remove seeds. Press seeds through a sieve to extract juice. Discard seeds. Chop tomato flesh and add to juice.

**STEP TWO** Heat in a pan, covered, on low, until simmering. Remove lid and simmer for 30 mins, until thickened, or up to 50 mins for a thicker mixture.

**STEP THREE** Remove pan from heat and blend until smooth. Add basil.

**STEP FOUR** Pour into sterilised bottles and seal. Place in a large pan and cover with hot water. Boil for 30 mins.

**STEP FIVE** Remove jars and cool completely. Press centres of lids. If they spring back, reheat or refrigerate. Store in a dark, cool, dry place for up to 1 year.

**In each cup** 415 kilojoules, 6g protein, 1g total fat (neg sat fat), 12g carbohydrate (12g sugar), 8g fibre, 38mg sodium.





Sicilian risotto with meatballs

### Veal involtini with porcini mushrooms

**SERVES 4 PREP 40mins COOK 10mins**  
**HALVE IT • SUPER EASY**

Growing up, I had involtini with anything and everything in it. It's great for using up leftovers.

- 20g dried porcini mushrooms
- 500g veal backstrap, cut into 1cm-thick slices
- 200g grated provolone cheese
- ¼ cup (60ml) olive oil
- 50g butter
- ⅓ cup (80ml) dry white wine
- 1½ cups (390g) tomato passata
- 150g green beans, trimmed, halved diagonally

- 1** Soak porcini in warm water for 10 mins. Drain and chop. Place veal between two sheets of plastic wrap and pound with a meat mallet until 3mm thick and about 10cm wide.
  - 2** Place cheese and porcini along centre of each piece of veal. Roll up and secure with toothpicks.
  - 3** Heat oil and butter in a frying pan on medium. Cook veal, turning, for 2-3 mins, until browned. Add wine. Cook for 2-3 mins, until evaporated. Add passata and beans. Cover and simmer for 2-3 mins, until beans are just tender. Season.
  - 4** Slice involtini in half and serve with sauce.
- In each serve** 2386 kilojoules, 43g protein, 41g total fat (18g sat fat), 7g carbohydrate (3g sugar), 3g fibre, 698mg sodium.

### Sicilian risotto with meatballs

**SERVES 4 PREP 30mins COOK 30mins**  
**FAMILY FAVOURITE • KID FRIENDLY**

The acidity of the tomatoes goes well with the richness of the meatballs in this recipe.

- 200g veal or beef mince
- 1 egg
- ⅓ cup (25g) stale breadcrumbs
- 1¼ cups (100g) grated parmesan, plus extra to serve
- 1 tbsp finely chopped flat leaf parsley
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ onion, finely chopped
- 1½ cups (300g) arborio rice
- ½ cup (125ml) dry white wine
- 4 cups (1L) chicken stock, hot
- 1 cup (260g) tomato passata
- 1 cup (120g) frozen peas
- 80g butter, diced

- 1** Combine mince, egg, breadcrumbs, ¼ cup of parmesan and parsley. Season and, using wet hands, roll into 20 walnut-size balls.
- 2** Heat oil in a large saucepan on medium-high. Cook meatballs in batches for 2-3 mins, until browned all over. Remove and set aside. Add onion and cook for 4-5 mins, until golden.
- 3** Add rice and cook for 2 mins, until rice is well coated. Add wine and cook for 2 mins,

until evaporated. Reduce heat to medium and add stock one ladle at a time, allowing liquid to absorb between additions, stirring, for 10 mins. Add passata and peas, bring to a simmer and cook for 6-8 mins, until rice is creamy and tender but firm to bite.

**4** Stir in meatballs and simmer for 2-3 mins, to reheat. Add remaining parmesan and butter. Stir until melted. Stand for 3 mins, then serve.

**In each serve** 3244 kilojoules, 31g protein, 39g total fat (19g sat fat), 71g carbohydrate (6g sugar), 4g fibre, 1243mg sodium.

### Roasted garlic & tomato soup

**SERVES 4 PREP 15mins COOK 40mins**  
**2½ OF 5-A-DAY • MAKE IT AHEAD**

I like to make this the day before, so the flavours infuse and become stronger. I also like to serve it at room temperature, as it's very refreshing.

- 1 garlic bulb
- ½ cup (125ml) extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to drizzle
- ½ onion, thinly sliced
- ½ carrot, thinly sliced
- 1 celery stalk, thinly sliced
- 4 cups (1kg) tomato passata
- 3 slices stale bread, cut into 1.5cm cubes
- ¼ cup (20g) grated parmesan, plus extra, shaved, to serve
- 10 basil leaves, finely sliced

- 1** Preheat oven to 180C or 160C fan. Place garlic on a large sheet of foil, drizzle with a little extra oil and wrap to enclose. Roast for 25 mins, until softened. Peel and reserve juices.
  - 2** Heat ⅓ cup of oil in a large saucepan on medium. Cook onion, carrot and celery for 5 mins, until onion softens. Add passata and bring to a simmer. Cook for 10 mins, until vegetables soften. Add garlic and season to taste. Using a stick blender, blend until smooth.
  - 3** Meanwhile, heat remaining oil in a frying pan on high. Cook bread, tossing occasionally, for 3-4 mins, until crisp. Remove pan from heat, add parmesan and basil and toss to combine.
  - 4** Scatter soup with crostini and shaved parmesan. Drizzle with a little extra oil. Serve.
- In each serve** 1642 kilojoules, 7g protein, 31g total fat (5g sat fat), 19g carbohydrate (4g sugar), 5g fibre, 247mg sodium.

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Roasted garlic & tomato soup

**FREEZER FRIENDLY**



**SPECIAL  
OCCASION**

### Spaghetti with frutti di mare

**SERVES 4 PREP 30mins COOK 15mins**  
**SOAK 1hr**

**LOW SAT FAT • DOUBLE IT • REHEAT IT**

This reminds me of summer, when my friends and I would eat as much seafood as we could.

- 350g spaghetti
- 1/3 cup (80ml) extra virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 spring (salad) onion, thinly sliced
- 1 fresh or dried chilli, chopped (optional)
- 500g clams, soaked in water for 1-2 hrs
- 500g black mussels, cleaned
- 1/2 cup (125ml) dry white wine
- 400g green king prawns, peeled, deveined, halved lengthways
- 350g cuttlefish, cleaned, halved lengthways, cut into 5mm strips

- 200g squid, cleaned, halved lengthways, cut into 5mm strips
- 300g tomato passata
- 2 tbsp chopped flat leaf parsley

- 1 Cook spaghetti in a saucepan of salted boiling water according to packet directions. Drain.
  - 2 Heat 2 tbsp of oil in a frying pan on medium. Cook garlic, onion and chilli for 4-5 mins, until soft. Add clams and mussels, cover and cook on high heat for 2 mins. Add wine and cook for 3 mins, until shells open. Remove seafood with a slotted spoon. Discard half of shells.
  - 3 Add prawns, cuttlefish and squid to pan and cook for 1 min, until just cooked. Add passata, clams and mussels with juices. Bring to a simmer. Add pasta and cook for 2 mins to combine. Add parsley and remaining oil and serve.
- In each serve** 2787 kilojoules, 48g protein, 22g total fat (3g sat fat), 64g carbohydrate (2g sugar), 4g fibre, 754mg sodium.

### Slow-cooked cuttlefish with tomato & peas

**SERVES 4 PREP 30mins COOK 50mins**  
**DOUBLE IT • REHEAT IT • MAKE IT AHEAD**

While spaghetti with *frutti di mare* reminds me of summer, this dish is what my mum cooked in the cooler weather. It rewards you for having made passata in the summer and is a mix between a seafood dish and a soup. You *must* make pasta the next day to serve with the leftovers.

- 1/2 cup (125ml) extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 onion, finely sliced
- 2 garlic cloves (1 crushed, 1 halved)
- 1 tsp dried chilli flakes
- 1.6kg cuttlefish, cleaned, halved lengthways, cut into 2cm strips
- 1/3 cup (80ml) dry white wine
- 1/2 cup (125ml) fish stock
- 2 cups (520g) tomato passata
- 4 slices ciabatta bread
- 1/2 cup (60g) frozen peas
- 2 tbsp finely chopped flat leaf parsley
- grated rind of 1 lemon

- 1 Heat 1 tbsp of oil in a large saucepan on medium heat. Cook onion, crushed garlic and chilli for 4-5 mins, until onion softens.
  - 2 Increase heat to high, add cuttlefish and cook for 2 mins, until cuttlefish is just opaque. Add wine, season and cook for 2 mins, until most of wine has evaporated. Add stock and cook for 2 mins, until stock has reduced slightly. Add passata and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 30-40 mins, until cuttlefish is tender.
  - 3 Meanwhile, preheat grill on high. Grill bread slices for 2 mins each side, until lightly browned. Rub toasted bread with cut sides of halved garlic clove.
  - 4 Add peas to cuttlefish and cook for 5 mins, until peas are tender. Stir through parsley and lemon rind. Divide cuttlefish and sauce between serving bowls and serve with bread.
- In each serve** 3022 kilojoules, 62g protein, 34g total fat (6g sat fat), 39g carbohydrate (5g sugar), 5g fibre, 1390mg sodium.

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Slow-cooked cuttlefish with tomato & peas

**COMFORT  
FOOD**

My mother peeled tomatoes with a knife and squeezed out the seeds with her hands. This was the start of her passata, which would end up in different dishes for every occasion. // Luca