Provencal Tomato Sauce

For the Freezer

Makes about 5 pints

This traditional Provence recipe is out of this world. Ripe garden tomatoes cooked with herbs, onion, garlic, and orange peel make a sauce no store can match. It goes well with pasta, rice, chicken, beef, hamburgers, or meat loaf.

Ingredients

- 6 pounds fresh tomatoes
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1/3 cup flour
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 5 cloves garlic, mashed
- 3 one-inch pieces orange peel
- 6 parsley sprigs tied around 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon fennel seed
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon celery salt
- Pinch of saffron
- 4 tablespoons tomato paste

Directions

1. **Peel and seed.** Plunge the tomatoes into boiling water for a few seconds, and slip off the skins. Cut them in half, gently squeeze out the seeds and juice, and chop the pulp. You should have about 8 cups.
2. **Cook the onions.** Heat the oil in a heavy pot, add the onions, cover, and cook slowly for about 15 minutes. Don't let them brown.
3. **Add the flour.** Uncover, stir in the flour, and cook for 3 minutes, without browning.
4. **Add the tomatoes.** Stir in the tomato pulp, garlic, and all the herbs and seasonings. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes.
5. **Simmer.** Stir in 2 tablespoons of the tomato paste. Simmer, partly covered, for about 1 1/2 hours, stirring often and scraping the bottom so it doesn't scorch. Press the pulp against the side of the pot to make the sauce smoother. If it starts to stick, add a little tomato juice or water.
6. **Finish.** When the sauce is thick enough to stand up on a spoon, remove the parsley, bay leaves, and orange peel. Stir in the last 2 tablespoons of tomato paste for a richer flavor, and add salt and pepper to taste.
7. **Freeze.** Cool the sauce quickly, then pack it into freezer containers or jars, leaving 1/2 inch of headspace. For best flavor, use it within about 6 months.

Freeze This One Because it has olive oil, flour, onions, and garlic, this sauce is not safe to can in a water bath, and there is no tested time for it. Freeze it instead. It keeps its wonderful flavor beautifully.

From vegetable-gardening-online.com/canning-tomato-sauce.html