

Tuesday Tomato Pasta

The soft-tomato pasta a former restaurant chef makes on an ordinary night. Good oil, ripe tomatoes, a little salt.



SERVES
2

PREP
5 min

COOK
15 min

Ingredients

200 g spaghetti or your favorite long pasta

4 ripe tomatoes, the soft ones, roughly chopped

2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus more to finish

1 large handful fresh basil leaves, torn

1 tsp sea salt, plus more for the pasta water

30 g Parmesan, grated (optional)

Method

1 Boil the pasta

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and salt it well, more than feels right. Add the pasta and cook until just shy of tender. Before you drain it, keep a cup of the cloudy water back. That water is half the sauce.

2 Soften the tomatoes

Warm the olive oil in a wide pan over medium heat. Add the garlic and let it go until it just turns golden, no further. Add the tomatoes and a pinch of salt. Give it a few minutes, just until the tomatoes slump and start to make their own sauce.

3 Bring it together

Lift the pasta straight into the tomatoes with a splash of the saved pasta water. Toss it over the heat for a minute so everything comes together and the sauce clings. Add more water a little at a time if it looks dry.

4 Finish and eat

Off the heat, fold through most of the basil and taste for salt. Plate it, add a thread of raw olive oil over the top, the last of the basil, and the Parmesan if you like. Do not photograph it. Just eat it warm.

From Elara's kitchen

The dish is almost impossible to ruin if the oil is good and the salt is honest. If your tomatoes are pale or out of season, a pinch more salt and an extra minute in the pan coaxes the flavor out. Best in June, when tomatoes are heavy and ripe.