

Classic Tomato Sauce

Ingredients

- 1 yellow onion, small dice (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 1 bay leaf (fresh or dry)
- 1 sprig fresh oregano (or 1/2 tsp. dry)
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp. tomato paste
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 quart jar of canned tomatoes, chopped



Cooking Directions

1. Cook the onions, with the olive oil, oregano, bay, garlic and salt over a medium heat in a large pot (12 qt) stirring constantly until soft and translucent (about 15 minutes).
2. Add the tomato paste and continue cooking for five minutes.
3. Add the canned tomatoes and stir constantly until the sauce begins to boil.
4. Continue cooking for 1 hour stirring ever four or five minutes such that the sauce does not burn. Season with more salt to taste. Freeze in cubes for storage.

Easy Homemade Barbecue Sauce

A recipe for homemade barbecue sauce using the homemade tomato sauce or paste you already have made, since you don't always have time to start from scratch with fresh tomatoes.

Ingredients

- 2 cups tomato sauce (15 oz.)
- 3/4 cup tomato paste (6 oz.)
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp. mustard powder
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- 1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper optional- to taste
- 1 tsp. salt or less if the tomato sauce has salt
- freshly ground black pepper to taste

Smoked paprika substitute:

commercial smoke flavor

Worcestershire sauce substitute:

soy sauce or coconut aminos

Mustard powder substitute:

Dijon mustard, & reduce vinegar to 2 tbs

Spicier? Use ancho or chipotle chilies instead of cayenne pepper for a nice smoky heat.

Milder? leave cayenne pepper out completely

Sweeter? Add about 1/4 cup of raw honey, or some stevia

Tangier? Add some lemon juice or vinegar

Instructions

- Place all ingredients for the BBQ Sauce into a large pot and mix together well.
- Bring to a boil over medium heat then reduce heat to low and let simmer for 15 to 20 minutes. The longer you simmer the darker the color of your BBQ Sauce. If it becomes too thick, add about 1/4 cup of water to thin it out.
- Do a taste test and adjust salt, sweetness and the heat to your liking.
- Use immediately, store in the fridge for up to 2 weeks, or put in clean Mason jars and freeze.

Easy Homemade Tomato Paste

8 lbs tomatoes
1 1/2 tbs olive oil (optional)

Prep Time: 25 minutes
Cook Time: 4 hours
Yield: Makes around 18 ounces

Instructions

- Rinse the tomatoes well, remove the stems, and cut into chunks.
- Fill a blender jar with the tomato chunks and blend until the tomatoes have all reduced to a fine sauce.
- To strain out the seeds and skin, place a mesh strainer or food mill over a large pot on the stove (or over the crock of a slow cooker pot). Pour the tomato sauce into the strainer. Use a spoon or a spatula to press the tomato sauce through the strainer into the pot below.
- Repeat with the remaining tomatoes. If you want to add red peppers, onions etc., now is the time to do it.

Stovetop: Heat the sauce over low to medium heat until simmering. Occasionally stir it and check on the consistency. As the water evaporates, the sauce will thicken. As it thickens, turn the heat down and check on the tomato paste more often. (It's more likely to burn as it gets thicker and has less water.)

Slow cooker: Cook the tomato sauce in the slow cooker on low with the lid off. In the slow cooker, you can leave the tomato paste unattended for longer periods of time. Still, as it starts to thicken, you will also need to check on it more often to prevent it from burning.

In the oven: To give the tomato paste a more caramelized flavor, and reduce it even further, you can bake it on clean baking pans on low heat in the oven. Occasionally use a spatula to scrape the tomato paste from the bottom of the tray with a spatula and stir it, while checking on the consistency. Some people choose to do the entire process of making the tomato paste in the oven, but I prefer to reduce it to a thick sauce on the stove first. Once you've achieved the desired consistency, the tomato paste is ready to be used in recipes, or ready to be stored.

Notes: Making your own tomato paste takes a bit of time, but it's totally worth it. You can then use it in soups, sauces, or add it to ground beef for homemade tacos, etc.

Storage: It can be stored in the fridge for 7-10 days; freeze any tomato paste that you don't use within a week.

More Notes: It can also be canned or frozen. (Add some citric acid—which can be in the form of a bit of lemon juice) to the paste before canning. Or if it's concentrated enough, it may not need it.)

Freezing in perfectly cube-shaped ice cube trays is a great way to save space in the freezer. (The cubes can be stored in freezer bags.)

Making tomato sauce and paste is a matter of reducing the water out of the tomatoes by cooking slowly on the stovetop on low heat. You have to stir often, and keep a constant eye on things, especially towards the end of the process! If you won't be able to watch it very closely, you may prefer finishing the batch in a slow cooker or in the oven.

Skinning: Should you leave the skin and peels while cooking? Some people begin cooking the sauce with the peels and seeds and then later strain them out. The idea is that the pectin in the tomato skins will be released into the sauce to help thicken it. On the other hand, cooking the sauce with the seeds and skin can make it bitter, depending on the particular tomato variety. I prefer freezing tomatoes, dropping them in hot water, and removing skins instantly. With fresh tomatoes, rinse them, cut them into chunks and blend them in the blender and later strain out the seeds and skin with either a mesh strainer or a food mill, for a smooth sauce or paste.

In a slow cooker, cook it with the lid off to allow for evaporation of the water. As the paste gets thicker, you may want to turn it to the low heat or "keep warm" setting to help keep the sauce from burning, and using a rubber or silicone spatula to stir it occasionally.

In the oven, choose one of the lowest temperature settings and turn on the convection setting (fan) if you have that option. Some people like to leave the oven slightly open to allow for steam to escape, but I haven't found it to be necessary. Occasionally use a spatula to scrape the pan and stir up the paste. Continue until you reach the desired consistency.

Thickening the tomato paste in the oven or slow cooker may be slower, but it's easier to keep your paste from burning using these methods. (Your paste won't need as much attention throughout the process.) Using these options isn't foolproof, though. You'll still want to be careful when it gets thick, to avoid burning!

Easy Homemade Ketchup

Ingredients

¾ cup tomato paste (approx 7 oz)	1½ tsp salt
2 tbs apple cider vinegar	⅜ tsp allspice
3 tbs sweetener of choice, or to taste	1 tbs molasses
1½ tsp granulated garlic (or ¾ tsp powder)	⅛ tsp cayenne pepper
1½ tsp granulated onion (or ¾ tsp powder)	⅔ cup water (filtered)

Instructions: Place all ingredients in a bowl. Stir to blend completely. Store in the refrigerator. Makes approximately 1½ cups.

In-A-Pinch Homemade Ketchup

1 6-oz. can tomato paste
2 tbs cider vinegar
3 tbs sweetener (I used raw honey)
1 tsp sea salt (to taste)
1 tsp garlic powder (to taste) or 1 clove put through a garlic press (fine)
1 tsp onion powder
1/4 tsp allspice
1 tsp black strap molasses
Several dashes cayenne OR chili powder (optional to taste)
1/2 – 2/3 cup water (depending on your taste and desired thickness)
Mix all the ingredients (except water) into a thick paste. Add in enough water & blend by hand to proper consistency.

Homemade Canned Salsa

Lois, Hiedi's Mom

Ingredients:

Basic Mild Salsa

21 tomatoes
5 medium onions
7 green peppers
5 jalapeño peppers
1 clove garlic
1 cup white vinegar
¼ cup salt
1 tbs cilantro

for more heat, add more jalapeño, habaneros, chili peppers

Put everything in a large pot, boil until foam disappears. Or, until it reaches thickness you desire. Pour into sterilized jars, clean rims on jars, place sterilized flats, lids on jars. Listen for them to seal. Makes 5 – 7 quarts.