

EPICUREAN ESSENTIALS

Easy Pasta Sauce

- San Marzano tomatoes, cut in half lengthwise
- olive oil
- coarse salt, to taste
- fresh basil (may substitute dried)
- fresh oregano (may substitute dried)
- fresh thyme (may substitute dried)
- garlic
- good quality balsamic vinegar

Heat oven to 400 degrees F. Lay tomatoes, cut side up in a baking dish large enough to hold them in a single layer. If using dried herbs instead of fresh, sprinkle tomatoes with dried herbs at this point. The amount of dried herbs to use is the same or a bit more than the appropriate amount of salt. Season with salt and drizzle somewhat generously with olive oil. Put in oven and roast until completely soft and edges begin to brown, about 45 - 60 minutes.

Just before taking the tomatoes out of the oven, mince the fresh herbs (if using) and garlic. Set aside. Remove tomatoes from oven. Flip tomatoes cut side down and pull the skin away with a fork. Discard the skin. Stir in the minced herbs and break up the tomatoes with a fork or a couple of dinner knives the same as you would cut butter into flour for biscuits or pie crust. Drizzle in balsamic vinegar and adjust seasonings to taste. Serve over hot pasta.

Notes:

- If your balsamic vinegar is not well aged and has a bit of an edge on it, stir in a bit of brown sugar to tame it.
- For my nine tomatoes, I used about 1 1/2 T. balsamic vinegar, 1 1/2 T. fresh basil, 2 t. fresh oregano, 2 t. fresh thyme and 1 large clove garlic.
- My nine tomatoes made enough sauce for 2 adults with no leftovers!