

Ignazio's Salsa di Pomodoro con Carne

2 pounds of round steak, cut 1/4-inch thick
1/4 cup of virgin olive oil
2 quarts of homemade salsa pomodoro (see recipe below)
1/2 pound chunk of Parmigiano or aged Cacciocavallo broken into pieces or 1 cup grated cheese
1 pound short pasta, such as Tubeti, Ditali, or Conchiglie, for 4 people

Dry the slices of round steak thoroughly on paper towels. Sauté the slices in the olive oil in a 3-quart Dutch oven or kettle until nicely browned. Remove the slices. Using the same pan, make the *salsa pomodoro* below. If the oil from the meat has burnt, discard it and add fresh olive oil to sauté the onions and garlic. Add the meat slices to the tomato sauce and simmer gently for two hours or until the slices are very tender. Remove the slices and using the fine grinding plate, pass them through a meat grinder, along with the cheese chunks. Alternatively, you can pulse the cooked meat a few times in a food processor, until fine ground. Don't turn it into a paste. For this method, use pre-grated cheese and mix it with the ground meat. Cook the pasta in several quarts of salted water until *al dente*. Drain. Return the pasta to the pan with the meat, cheese, and a cup or two of the tomato sauce to warm very gently, covered. Serve in bowls with additional sauce and grated cheese. Serves 8 to 10.

Salsa Pomodoro

2 large cans of peeled Italian tomatoes
1 large red onion, chopped fine
4 plump cloves of garlic minced
1 small carrot grated
1/4 cup virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon of peperoncino (crushed dried chili pepper)
2 tablespoons of finely chopped Italian parsley
2 teaspoons of fresh thyme leaves
2 teaspoons of fresh rosemary (optional)
2 tablespoons of chopped fresh basil
Salt and fresh-ground black pepper to taste
1 teaspoon or more of sugar if tomatoes are too tart

Over medium heat, sauté onion, carrot, thyme, parsley, optional rosemary, and peperoncino in olive oil, until onion is golden.

Add the garlic and sauté two minutes, making certain it isn't burning.

Crush the tomatoes and add to the above ingredients.

Add basil.

Add salt, pepper to taste. Add sugar, only if it's necessary.