

## Baked Tomato Sauce

3 pounds ripe tomatoes  
3 tablespoons minced garlic  
¼ cup minced parsley  
¼ cup minced fresh oregano  
¼ cup minced fresh basil

¾ cup extra virgin olive oil  
Sea salt and black pepper to taste  
Peperoncino, hot, red chili flakes to taste

Adjust the rack to the upper third of the oven, and preheat to 400°. Line a baking pan with lightly oiled foil or parchment paper.

Wash the tomatoes, and gently remove the stem end without cutting too deeply into the tomato. Cut the tomatoes in half and place them cut side up on the prepared pan.

Sprinkle the tomatoes with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Drizzle about ¼ cup of the olive oil over the tomatoes, and place in the oven. Bake for about 1½ hours.

In the meantime, mince the garlic and the three herbs. Mix ¼ cup of the olive oil into the herbs.

Remove the tomatoes from the oven and evenly spread the garlic over each half. Then spread the herb mixture evenly over the tomatoes. Return to the oven, and bake about another half hour. Check to see that the skins have begun to blacken.

At this point, you can serve the tomatoes as is or allow them to come to room temperature before serving.

To turn the tomatoes into a sauce, remove them to the bowl of a food processor. Add the remaining ¼ cup of olive oil, the peperoncino (generally about ¼ teaspoon), and pulse just until the tomatoes become a chunky sauce.

Serve over pasta with fresh basil leaves.

Any leftover sauce can be gently reheated for future use.