

# CROWD saucing



## How a manual machine works

When using a tomato machine (with a conical attachment, photo #3) The passata will flow through the grill of the machine. The seeds and skins will separate from the liquid and pass through end of the spout. You'll need a bowl to catch the skins placed at the end of the machine, and a bucket to catch the passata under the grill. A tomato press (photo #1 & 2) will retain the skins in the funnel, with the passata being pressed through the spout. You will need to tip out the skins once they are pressed of juice, and have a bowl under the spout of the machine. If you are using a mouli (photo #4), use the medium or finest grill piece. The seeds and skins will be left in the bowl of the mouli, so you will just need one bowl to catch the juice and pulp that passes through the mill.

## How to make passata— cooking method



Prepare the tomatoes. Remove any soft spots, mould, and the cores of the tomatoes (shown) and roughly chop. You do not have to remove the seeds and skins.

*Note:* If you're working with very juicy tomatoes, you can squeeze out and discard the seeds and watery juice to help your sauce be a thicker passata.



Bring the tomatoes to a simmer over a medium heat. Cook for about 2 minutes, stirring, just until tomatoes soften. This brief cooking helps break the tomatoes down and makes it easier to process them through a manual machine. As you will be simmering your tomatoes 'dry', i.e. without any oil, so be careful to avoid scorching.

*Optional:* Add a pinch of salt to draw out the tomatoes' liquid.

*Note:* If you have an electric tomato mill or food mill and a strong arm, you can skip this initial cooking step, if you like.



Let the cooked tomatoes drain in a colander for 5-15 minutes. Discard the water and yellowish liquid the tomatoes leech. This time also allows the tomatoes to cool for easier handling.

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Process the tomatoes through the machine in small batches. Don't over-fill the funnel or they may spill. Use a tamper (no fingers), to guide the tomatoes down the funnel (pictured).

Reprocess the skins 1-2 times to get the last of the juice from them.



Take the fresh passata and use a ladle and funnel to pour into bottles. Fill the bottles to 2cm below the lid, to allow for the passata to expand when it is heated and preserved in a water bath.

Screw the lids on firmly but not exceedingly tightly — imagine you're putting the lid on a drink bottle. If lids are screwed on too tightly hot air won't be able to escape during preserving. This may result in bottles cracking under pressure. Conversely, if the lids are on too loosely, they may not seal.

## Optional extras

Add a sprig of basil or other herbs to the bottom of each bottle before filling.

Add 1/2 cup of olive oil per 2.5 kg tomatoes at the cooking stage for a richer passata.

Cook the tomatoes with minced garlic and/or onion and/or herbs to your taste

## Water bathing: Preserving the passata



You can use a large saucepan or stock pot (that holds 4 or more bottles, or a vacola (pictured).

Place a good layer of newspaper or a tea-towel on the bottom of the saucepan/vacola. Place a few towels/newspaper around the bottles also. This stops the bottles from knocking together once the water is boiling.



Fill the water bath with **cold** water. The sauce has to rise in temperature slowly—over at least 45 minutes. This ensures the sauce is hot throughout the bottle, and not just at the surface.

Some methods recommend submerging the bottles or filling the water bath up to just below the lid of the bottles. Both work! Once the water is at a slow boil, leave it to continue to boil like this for 1 hour. Adjust the temperature gauge or the stove if need be.

Once the bottles have finished preserving, leave them in the water bath until the water has cooled to room temperature. Otherwise, be careful.



Immediately after the bottles have boiled, the lids will be slightly 'inverted'. As the bottles cool, the vacuum-seal created by the heating process will 'pop' the lids down and seal them. If lids have not sealed, they can be water bathed again after checking if the lid is not compromised in any way (details on page 7.)

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