

Olive's Kitchen

Pasta Varigotti - With cherry tomatoes

'Pasta Varigotti' is the name we use for a pasta dish we enjoyed in the small town of Varigotti on the Italian Riviera. It is one of those recipes where simple is better ('less is more') and where the quality of the ingredients speak up. Use whatever pasta you wish, but rigatoni or pappardelle (wide flat ribbons) work well, especially if fresh pasta. Use a single colour cherry tomato or a mixture of colours – if they are largish, cut them in half before adding to the sauce, and try to prick whole ones with a pointy knife before serving to stop them from spurting.

For two people:

- two full serves rigatoni, pappardelle or other pasta (dried or fresh)
- 1 tbsp olive oil and more to drizzle
- one punnet (250 g) cherry tomatoes
- 2 to 4 tbsps rich tomato sugo*
- salt and pepper to taste
- shaved parmesan or equivalent
- several basil leaves

(*See recipe for Italian Tomato Sauce – Sugo di Pomodoro.)



Method:

Cook the pasta as per normal to be ready when the sauce is finished. Strain the sugo if necessary and, if it is not rich and unctuous, heat it separately to boil it down to thicken it.

Add the oil to a medium sized frying pan. Turn to medium heat.

Chop large cherry tomatoes into halves or quarters. Add these and any whole tomatoes to the oil and toss carefully a few times to allow the tomatoes to soften and 'blister'.

Depending on how much has oozed into the frying pan, add two or more tablespoons of the sugo to the cherry tomatoes. Heat through gently and lightly season with salt and pepper.

Drain the pasta and share between two plates. Pushing the cherry tomatoes aside, spoon some tomato sugo over the pasta. Top with the cherry tomatoes and sauce, drizzle each plate with oil. Garnish with shaved parmesan and whole or torn basil leaves. Serve immediately.

Serve:

Serves two as a medium sized main course or four as an entrée.

Equipment:

Stock pot or large saucepan for the pasta. Frying pan for the sauce.

Difficulty and Time:

Not difficult (2/5). 10 minutes.

Notes and variations:

- Use lovely olive oil and the best parmesan-style cheese you can find.