

“A tavola non s’invecchia!” I can still hear my uncle Tony yelling at me across the dinner table during long family dinners. This phrase translates to “no one gets old at the table,” meaning that when we eat together, time literally stops—so don’t rush. Slow down. Enjoy yourself. When Uncle Tony shouted this, he was usually trying to get me to focus on what was in front of me: our family and the meal we were eating. It was a little lofty for me to understand when I was a kid, but as I’ve gotten older (turns out we do get old away from the table), I live in Uncle Tony’s words, sharing food with people I love and finding that magic space where time stands still.”

Dan Pelosi, from his cookbook, *Let’s Eat: 101 Recipes to Fill Your Heart and Home*

GROSSY’S MARINARA

Makes 8 cups

WHAT YOU’LL NEED

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium red onion, diced
10 garlic cloves (from 1 head of garlic), roughly chopped
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
Red pepper flakes
1 cup red wine
2 tablespoons dried oregano
2 pounds medium plum tomatoes, quartered
2 (28-ounce) cans tomato puree
1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
A handful fresh basil leaves, roughly torn
Sugar, as needed

WHAT YOU’LL DO

1. Add the olive oil to a large saucepan over medium heat. When the oil is shimmering, add the onion, garlic, plus a generous pinch of salt, black pepper, and red pepper flakes. Cook until the onions are soft and the garlic is starting to brown, about 6 minutes.
2. Add the wine and dried oregano and simmer until the wine is reduced by about half, about 4 minutes.
3. Add the chopped tomatoes. As the tomatoes simmer, use a wooden spoon to stir and smash occasionally, until the tomatoes are mostly broken down, about 20 minutes.
4. Add the tomato puree, tomato paste, basil, and another pinch of salt. Simmer on low, stirring occasionally, while the flavors develop and the sauce thickens. This can go on for literally hours, but about 20 minutes is your minimum here.
5. Taste for seasoning, adding more salt, black pepper, red pepper flakes, and sugar as needed. Serve immediately or cool completely in the pot before storing. You can make the sauce up to 3 days in advance—the flavor will only get better with time. Transfer your cooled pot to the fridge and then reheat over low heat before serving.