

Peperonata

With this recipe it pays to be patient and to make sure you keep an eye on it. Modern stovetops can be tricky with the way they disperse heat and are often alot hotter than you think. Lower and slower is always better so if you feel like your peppers are caramelising too quickly or frying in any way, turn it down and add more time to the stewing process. The longer you simmer the more time the flavours have time to marry together and add complexity to this southern Italian dish.

1kg red capsicum or a mix of red and yellow (I like a 70:30 ration)

4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

A knob of butter

1 large onion, finely sliced

Salt, to taste

400g canned, whole plum tomatoes

Red wine vinegar, to taste

Cut the capsicum into long strips, about 1cm wide. Make sure you have deseeded and removed any of the white pith.

In a heavy-based pot with a lid, heat the olive oil and butter over low heat. Add the sliced onions and let soften slowly, you dont want them to caramelize or fry in the buttery oil, this might take up to ten minutes.

Add the peppers and a pinch of salt, stir, then cover and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring every now and then. If you take the lid off to check the peppers they should be sweating and producing lots of moisture.

Once the peppers and onions are looking nice and soft, add the canned tomatoes. Leave the lid off the pot and let simmer over medium heat for another 40 minutes. This is when you need to keep an eye on your stew, stirring occasionally and making sure the tomatoes are breaking up (maybe use a fork to help them along).

The peperonata is ready when the peppers are soft and everything has come together into a thick stew. Taste, season generously and add splash of vinegar to kick a little acidity into it.

Serve through pasta immediately or put in a container and store in fridge.