

Iberian Pig Romesco Sauce

4 medium ripe tomatoes (1.75 lbs) cored
1 head garlic, sliced in half crosswise
2 Tbs. plus 1/3 cup EV olive oil
1/4 cup blanched almonds
1/4 peeled hazelnuts
1 dried ancho chile, cored, seeded, slit, and opened so it lies fairly flat
1 tsp. kosher salt or sea salt, more to taste
2-3 Tbs. red-wine vinegar
2 Tbs. red wine (dry or fruity not oaky)
1 slice stale white bread, torn, if needed



Heat oven to 375F. Put the tomatoes and 1/2 of the garlic head in a baking pan. Drizzle about 1 Tbs. evo into the cored tomato wells and on top of the garlic half. Roast until the tomatoes and garlic are well caramelized but not burnt, about 90 minutes. From the remaining half head of garlic, coarsely chop 1 Tbs. garlic and put in food processor.

While the tomatoes roast, heat about 1 Tbs evo in a small saute pan over medium heat. Toast the almonds and hazelnuts in the pan, until golden brown. shake and stir, do not burn. 5-6 minutes. Cool the nuts on a paper towel and put them in the food processor.

If using a dried chile, sear it in the same small pan over medium-high heat (keep it flat with a spatula or a fork) until a smoke wisp appears, about 10 seconds per side. Soak it in 1 cup hot tap water until soft, about 15 minutes. Drain and put the chile in the food processor.

When the tomatoes and garlic are caramelized, let them cool. Pinch off the tomato skins (discard) and squeeze out the garlic pulp.

Put the tomatoes and garlic in the processor. Add the salt and start the processor, pouring in the remaining 1/3 cup olive oil in a slow steady stream, as if making mayonnaise. Add the vinegar and pulse to incorporate, and taste; the sauce should have some zing, so add more if needed. Add salt to taste.

Process the romesco until it comes together as a sauce but not so much as to lose its coarse, nutty texture. The sauce should be thick and creamy. If it seems to thick, add 1 or 2 Tbs. red wine. If the sauce is too thin, add bread, pulsing a few more times.

Recipe from The Iberian Pig, as discussed by Chef Bill Devin