Sides / Italy

Peperonata

Sweet bell peppers, onion, and tomato slow-braised in a generous pool of olive oil until every strip has completely collapsed into a silky, jammy compote that tastes more concentrated and sweet than anything a raw pepper ever promised.

Time 60 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 100 parts Mixed sweet bell peppers (red, yellow, orange — halved, seeded, cut into 1cm strips)
- ☐ 40 parts Yellow onion (halved, thinly sliced)
- ☐ 30 parts Ripe plum tomatoes (roughly chopped)
- ☐ 4 parts Garlic cloves (thinly sliced)
- ☐ 20 parts Extra-virgin olive oil
- ☐ 2 parts Fine sea salt
- ☐ 3 parts Red wine vinegar (optional finish)
- ☐ 4 parts Fresh basil leaves

Let's make it.

01 Heat olive oil in a wide, heavy pot or deep skillet over medium-low heat. Add sliced onion and garlic. Season with a pinch of salt. Cook very gently, stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes until the onion is completely soft, sweet, and golden — not browned, just deeply cooked. Peperonata is a slow recipe; do not rush this step.

02 Add all the pepper strips to the pot. Season with salt. Stir to coat in the oil and onion. Cover with a lid and cook over medium-low heat for 20 minutes, lifting the lid and stirring every 5 minutes. The peppers will release a great deal of liquid — this is correct. The steam and pepper juice create the braising liquid.

03 Add the chopped tomatoes. Stir to combine. Remove the lid and cook over medium-low heat for 20–25 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes, until the tomatoes have completely collapsed, the liquid has reduced to a thick, jammy, glossy sauce that just coats the peppers, and the whole pot is a unified, glistening compote. The peppers should be completely tender and silky.

04 Off the heat, add a small splash of red wine vinegar if using — it lifts and brightens the sweetness. Taste and adjust salt. Tear fresh basil and stir through. Serve warm, at room temperature, or cold. Peperonata is extraordinarily versatile: use it as a side dish, bruschetta topping, pasta sauce, pizza base, or accompaniment to grilled meats and fish.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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