Sauces / Italy

# Tonnato

A silky, pale-gold cold sauce from Piedmont — oil-packed tuna, anchovy, and capers emulsified with mayonnaise into something profoundly oceanic and savory, with a coolness that makes rich meats suddenly light. It is famously served with thinly sliced cold veal in vitello tonnato, but equally at home on roasted peppers or hard-boiled eggs.

**Time** 15 min **Servings** 4

## What you'll need.

- [ ] 4 parts Oil-packed tuna, drained
- [ ] 1 part Anchovy fillets in oil
- [ ] 1 part Capers, rinsed (brined or salt-packed)
- [ ] 4 parts Mayonnaise (good quality or homemade)
- [ ] 1 tbsp Fresh lemon juice
- [ ] 2 tbsp Extra-virgin olive oil
- [ ] 2 tbsp Cold water or cold veal poaching liquid
- [ ] 1 to taste Fine salt and white pepper
- [ ] 1 to taste Capers and lemon zest, for serving

## Let's make it.

**01** Combine the drained tuna, anchovy fillets, rinsed capers, and lemon juice in a food processor or blender. Process until the mixture becomes a smooth, homogeneous paste, scraping the sides as needed. There should be no visible chunks of tuna — the goal is a completely smooth, dense purée that will blend evenly into the mayonnaise.

**02** With the processor running on low, spoon in the mayonnaise and drizzle in the olive oil. Process briefly — just enough to integrate. Over-processing after adding the mayo can make the sauce gluey. Scrape down and fold once by hand if needed. The sauce should be pale gold, thick, and absolutely smooth.

**03** Add cold water (or cold veal poaching liquid for a more complex flavor) a tablespoon at a time to thin the sauce to a pourable but still coating consistency — it should coat the back of a spoon and fall in a slow ribbon, not run like water. Season with white pepper and salt, tasting carefully since the anchovies and capers have added significant salt. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before serving to let the flavors meld.

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