

Stuffed Tomatoes

Another from the childhood memories of *monsieur* Raymond Blanc. This seems to be tomatoes stuffed with what is essentially a vegetable risotto.

Planning

serves:	4
prep time:	40 mins
cooking time:	1 hr

Ingredients

Olive oil
1 medium onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2 sprigs thyme
4 ripe tomatoes, skinned, seeded and chopped
100g tomato purée
½ tsp sugar
4 ripe large tomatoes (eg marmande or Jack Hawkins)
1 onion, finely chopped
20g butter
1 tsp thyme leaves
1 bay leaf
100g Carnaroli risotto rice
1 carrot, finely chopped
1 stick celery, thinly sliced
1 courgette, thinly sliced
30g peas
2 tbs whipping cream
85g Gruyère cheese, finely grated

Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C/gas 4.

First, make the tomato sauce. Put 3 tbs olive oil, one medium onion and the garlic into a pan and soften, without colouring, over a medium heat for 3 minutes. Add the 2 thyme sprigs, the chopped tomatoes and the tomato purée and cook for 7-8 minutes. Add 300ml water, season and cook for a further 5 minutes. Remove the thyme and check the seasoning; sweeten with the sugar only if necessary. Purée the sauce and set aside.

Slice a cap off each of the large tomatoes and scoop out the pulp and juices into a bowl.

Now make the rice stuffing. Soften the onion in the butter with the thyme leaves and bay leaf. Add the rice and cook for 1 minute, stirring to coat the grains. Add 200ml water and 150g of the juices and chopped pulp from the tomatoes. Add the carrot and season. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat to a gentle simmer and cook for 5 minutes stirring occasionally. Add the celery, courgette and peas together with a further 75ml water, then cook for another 15 minutes. Stir in the cream and Gruyère, check the seasoning and remove the bay leaf.

Fill each tomato with the stuffing and top each with a tomato cap. Place them on a baking dish and drizzle with a little olive oil before baking for 25 minutes. Serve them with the reheated tomato sauce.