

good

Most people have their family-favorite marinara sauce—the one they grew up with. In my house, I had my grandmother Nan's sauce that we ate at holidays and when she visited. And then I had my mother's, which I also very much looked forward to.

This version is very similar to my mom's and evokes happy childhood memories for me. If your family recipe happens to be very low in fat (many marinaras are not, contrary to popular belief), use that as a substitute for this one. But if it has a significant amount of olive oil or other fat, you'll want to use this one or a low-fat, relatively low-sodium version.

Do note, however, that canned tomatoes contain different amounts of sugar and salt, depending on which brand you buy and even the time of year the tomatoes are packed. Thus you may need to alter the added salt and sugar each time you make this recipe to make it suit your taste. Just be sure to add as little as possible—you don't want to overdo it.

1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil  
1½ cups finely chopped onions  
2 tablespoons minced fresh garlic  
Two 28-ounce cans crushed tomatoes  
1 tablespoon dried oregano  
2 teaspoons sugar, plus extra, if desired  
½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes  
½ teaspoon salt, or to taste

Place a large nonstick saucepan over medium heat. Put in the olive oil, onions, and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until tender but not brown, 7 to 10 minutes. Add the crushed tomatoes, oregano, sugar, red pepper flakes, and ½ teaspoon salt. Stir until well combined. Turn the heat to low. Cook, covered, for at least 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Season with additional salt, if needed.

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MAKES 6½ TO 7 CUPS

Each ¾-cup serving has: 55 calories, 2 g protein, 12 g carbohydrates, <1 g fat, trace saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 3 g fiber, 252 mg sodium